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## PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

**Motion: Roy West/Nora Sanders**

**GC 42 2015 - 001**

### **Bounds of Council**

That the bounds of Commons for the 42nd General Council 2015 be the arena 1 floor at the numbered tables at Grenfell Campus of Memorial University, Corner Brook, Newfoundland/Labrador excluding the visitor seating and unnumbered tables.

The bounds of the court when the Commissions are in Session will be: Canada House, Meeting Location 2; Civic Centre Conference Room 2 and the arena 1 floor at the numbered tables at Grenfell Campus of Memorial University, Corner Brook, Newfoundland/Labrador excluding the visitor seating and unnumbered tables.;

### **Corresponding Members**

That the following persons who are in attendance be corresponding members of the 42nd General Council 2015 and as such, be entitled to speak but not to move motions or to vote:

- Moderators: The Very Reverend David Giuliano, Dr. Marion Best, The Very Reverend Lois Wilson, The Very Reverend Stanley McKay, The Very Reverend Marion Parry, The Very Reverend William Phipps, The Very Reverend Peter Short;
- Global partner representatives, ecumenical, inter-faith and official guests of the Council
- The Youth Forum participants and leaders who are not Commissioners;
- Participants and leaders of the Children and Young Teens;
- ~~Those who have been requested by the General Secretary, General Council to serve as resource persons to the Council;~~
- Members of the Business Committee who are not Commissioners;
- General Council Officers, Executive Ministers, Executive Officers, and Conference Executive Secretaries and Speaker;
- Guests appointed by the Executive of the General Council.
- Connie Budd.

**Resource People:** ~~That the following persons and such other people as the General Secretary, General Council, may designate, be named as Resource People, who may be called upon to speak as needed to support the business of the Council:~~ Kevin Barnes, Perry Bellegarde, Russel Burns, Adele Halliday, Adrian Jacobs, Jamie Scott and Marie Wilson.

### **Business Committee Membership**

- Fred Monteith, Chair
- Gary Paterson, Moderator
- Nora Sanders, General Secretary, General Council
- Shirley Cleave, Chair of the Permanent Committee on Governance and Agenda
- Karen Smart, Staff Resource to the Business Committee
- Cynthia Gunn, resource to the Business Committee and Parliamentarian
- David Allen, Parliamentarian
- Peter Hartmans – Conference Executive Secretary

### **Parliamentarians**

That the parliamentarians for the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council be Cynthia Gunn and David Allen.

### **Friends in Council**

That the Friends in Council of the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 be Roy West, Kathy Brett and Rosemary Lambie.

### **Scrutineers**

That the Scrutineers for the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 be:

- Norma Thompson (Chief Scrutineer)
- Robyn Green
- Tim Crouch Charles McMillan
- Ted Harrison
- Annette Taylor
- Mead Baldwin

### **Reference and Counsel**

That the Commons Reference and Counsel of the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 be Katharine Moore, Don Stiles and Nancy Knox.

### **Business before the 42nd General Council 2015**

That the reports and proposals printed in the Work Books, including online additions, along with any change pages, and any new business received by the deadline for new business, be received for consideration by the 42nd General Council 2015.

### **New Business**

All notices of new business will be presented, in writing, to the Business Committee. The Business Committee will from time to time report items of new business and recommendations for incorporation into the agenda, unless the court otherwise determines in the case of a specific item.

New business received, in writing by the Business Committee, prior to 9 a.m., Friday, August 14, 2015 will be incorporated into the approved agenda, unless the court determines otherwise.

Items of New Business will be ordered:

1. Not on a first come-first presented basis, but with preference to items that:
  - a. Arise unexpectedly in response to the meeting of the Council; and
  - b. Arise in response to global or national matters that occur during the meeting of the Council.

New Business not able to be dealt with due to time limitations will be dealt with by a motion to refer. Referral may be made to the General Secretary, General Council or to the Executive of the General Council. The presenter of the proposal will be allowed to speak to the proposal.

## Business Procedures

The Moderator will assume responsibility for chairing the meeting, making any rulings necessary and ensuring that there is full opportunity for discussion and decision making. The Moderator will apply the rules Rules of Debate and Order (*The Manual Appendix*) and as approved herein in the Opening Resolutions for this 42nd General Council 2015. “*Bourinot’s Rules of Order*” will be used as the authority should a question arise which is not answered by the Appendix.

- Speakers will:
  - Speak from designated microphones in the court;
  - Be recognized by the Moderator prior to speaking;
  - Begin comments by identifying themselves by name, role, and Conference (or position as appropriate);
  - Only speak once to a given proposal except at the discretion of the Moderator;
  - Each new speaker should offer a new perspective or information
  - Speak for no longer than 90 seconds except at the discretion of the Moderator;
  - Use the designated procedural floor microphone to raise a point of order, that is to raise a specific question of procedure with the Moderator;
  - Use the floor microphones to raise points of personal privilege which will be understood to be limited to comments noting that the individual raising the point has been insulted or maligned in the current debate.

**Note:** Points of general privilege (inability to hear, temperature of the room, missing documentation) will be made to the Friends in Council, Roy West, Kathy Brett or Rosemary Lambie, who will determine how the concern will be addressed. Concerns for the well-being of individuals, celebrations of birthdays, etc. will be made to the Friends in Council who will coordinate these for “community moments”.

## Prioritizing Work:

The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015): will prioritize its work in the following manner:

### 1<sup>st</sup> Priority

Proposals are those that deal directly with the Comprehensive Review Task Group report and recommendations and all related Proposals and Response forms. These will receive priority attention at the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015). They will be referred to a Sessional Committee that will bring its recommendations to full court for decision.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Priority

Proposals are those, other than those outlined in Category 1, which contemplate substantive changes to the Basis of Union that affect denominational identity and would require the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) to authorize a Category 3 Remit. They will be brought before the full court for decision.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority

Proposals are those calling the church to take a time-bound stand on national or global issues and/or on an issue for which the church does not have an existing policy or statement. They will be referred to a Commission for decision.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Priority

Proposals are those which contemplate changes to existing General Council policies and procedures, or those which more properly fall within the purview of another court of the church. They will be referred to the Business Committee for prioritization and may be referred to the full court, a Commission, the General Council Executive, or to the court which has responsibility, for decision.

### **5<sup>th</sup> Priority**

Proposals are those calling the church to broader support for existing statements, policies, or procedures of the General Council. They will be referred to the General Council Executive for decision or the General Secretary General Council for action.

### **Procedure for Withdrawing Proposals from an Omnibus or Consent Motion**

The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council adopt the following procedure in the event that a Commissioner desires that a Proposal be withdrawn from an omnibus or consent motion and/or that a Proposal be assigned to a body other than that recommended by the Business Committee:

- 1) The Commissioner making such a request will have one minute to make their request and provide their rationale for their request.
- 2) The Moderator or his designate will ask, having heard the request and rationale, “Are there twenty Commissioners who support the request? Please indicate your support of this position by using your electronic voting device.
- 3) If there are not twenty Commissioners who support the request, then the request is denied.
- 4) If there are twenty Commissioners who support the request then the Moderator will direct the Business Committee to find a place for the work consistent with the request.

Although not required, advance notice to the Business Table would be helpful.

### **Procedure for Addressing the Work of the Comprehensive Review**

1. The report and recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group and related Response Sheets and Proposals have been referred to a Sessional Committee of the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015);
2. The role of the Sessional Committee is to consider said material with a view to bringing recommendations to the full court for consideration and decision.
3. Said Sessional Committee is comprised of one Commissioner from each Conference, two co-chairs named by The Business Committee, two Commissioners named by the Business Committee to ensure participant balance. In addition there is one Youth Forum Delegate who is a corresponding member. They are as follows:

**Co-Chairs:** Larry Doyle and Jean Brown

**Members:** ANCC – TBD, Sharon Aylsworth, Ross Bartlett, Nicole Beaudry, Katelyn Cody, Dwaine Dornan, Janet Gear, Hannah Lee, Regina Madimbu, Ryan McNally, Barb Miller, Greg Smith-Young, Erin Todd, Carey Wagner and Paul Douglas Walfall

**Corresponding Member:** Ethan Evans

### **Election of Moderator**

That the following be approved as the process for nominations and election of the 40th Moderator of The United Church of Canada:

1. Nominations may be made from the floor up to 5 pm on Sunday August 9. There must be a mover and a seconder, and the nominee must indicate willingness to stand. The Moderator will call for any further nominations just before 5 pm. Advance notice to the business table of any intended nominations is not essential but will be appreciated.
2. Nominations from the floor of the Council will be declared closed at 5 p.m., Sunday August 9, 2015.
3. The nominees will be introduced to the Council and presented with their nominee stoles after the supper break on Sunday August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
4. Candidates will address the Council, individually, on Monday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
5. Voting will be by ballot and take place on Thursday, August 13, 2015.
6. A candidate will be declared elected as the 42nd Moderator upon attaining 50% plus one of the votes cast.
7. If there are ten or more names on the ballot, four with the least number of votes cast in their favour will be released from the subsequent ballots; if there are seven or more and fewer than ten names on the ballot, three with the least number of votes cast in their favour will be released from the subsequent ballots; if there are more than four and fewer than eight names on the ballot, two with the lowest number of votes cast in their favour will be released from the subsequent ballots; with four or fewer names, the one with the lowest number of votes will be released from subsequent ballots.
8. When there are seven or more names on the ballot and there is a tie in the number of votes cast for the candidates with the least number of votes in their favour as set out in the preceding paragraph, the candidates who are tied will be released from subsequent ballots. This could mean that more than the specified number of candidates could be released from a ballot as set out in the preceding paragraph.
9. Announcements of the results of the ballots will take place at times determined by the Moderator with advice from the Business Committee.
10. Tallies of votes will not be announced.

### **Minutes of the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council 2012**

That the minutes of the 41st General Council 2012 be approved.

### **Minute Secretary**

That the Minute Secretary for the 42nd General Council 2015 be Susan Fortner.

### **Accountability Reports**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 accept the accountability report of The Executive of the General Council.

That the 42nd General Council 2015 receive for information the following reports:

- Moderator's Accountability Report
- Moderator's Advisory Committee Report
- Accountability Report of the General Secretary, General Council
- A Journey to Full Communion
- Mission and Ministry with Migrant Churches
- Mutual Recognition of Ministries with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea
- Mutual Recognition with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines
- Aboriginal Ministries Council Report
- Newfoundland and Labrador Conference Report
- Maritime Conference Report
- Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference
- Bay of Quinte Conference Report
- Toronto Conference Report
- Hamilton Conference Report
- London Conference Report
- Manitou Conference Report
- All Native Circle Conference Report
- Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Report
- Saskatchewan Conference Report
- Alberta and Northwest Conference Report
- British Columbia Conference Report
- Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools Report
- Effective Leadership Report
- Candidacy Pathways Report
- Judicial Committee Report
- The Conference Records Report
- The Manual Committee Report
- The Archives Committee Report
- The United Church Foundation Report
- The Nominations Committee Report
- The Comprehensive Review Task Group Report

- Rulings and Opinions of The General Secretary, General Council – July 2012 to June 2015
- Minutes of the Executive of the General Council – June 2012 to June 2015
- Actions of the Executive – Summary Report

### **Establish Commissions**

That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 establish three Commissions to meet Tuesday, August 11, 2015 to complete the work assigned to them by the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

### **Voting Privileges in Commissions**

That the Commissioners of the General Council have voting privileges in the Commission to which their membership has been assigned; that Corresponding members of General Council have privilege of voice but no vote, in Commissions; and that the Moderator and the General Secretary are ex-officio members of all Commissions.

### **Business Assigned to Red - Partridgeberry Commission**

That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 assign to Red - Partridgeberry Commission the items of business as reported in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

### **Membership of the Red - Partridge Berry Commission**

That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 appoint the membership of Red - Partridgeberry Commission as assigned in the Workbook.

### **Leadership of the Red - Partridgeberry Commission**

That Adam Hanley and Sue Broderick be the Co-Chairs and that Shirley Welch be the Minute Secretary of the Red- Partridge Berry Commission.

That the Reference and Counsel of the Red - Partridgeberry Commission be Don Stiles, Jean Bethune, Sean Handcock and Stephen Hershey.

### **Business Assigned to Yellow – Bakeapple Commission**

That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 assign to the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission the items of business as assigned in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

### **Membership of Yellow – Bakeapple Commission**

That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 appoint the membership of the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission as assigned in the Workbook.

### **Leadership of Yellow – Bakeapple Commission**

That Shirley Cleave and Paula Gale be the Co-Chairs and that Susan Whitehead is the Minute Secretary of the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission.

That the Reference and Counsel of the Yellow - Bakeapple Commission be Katharine Moore, Kate Crawford, Dale Skinner, and Paul Stott.

**Business Assigned to the Blue - Blueberry Commission**

That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 assign to the Blue - Blueberry Commission the items of business as reported in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

**Membership of the Blue - Blueberry Commission**

That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 appoint the membership of the Blue - Blueberry Commission as assigned in the Workbook.

**Leadership of the Blue - Blueberry Commission**

That Graham Brownmiller and Bev Kostichuk be the Co-Chairs and the Stefanie Uyesugi be the Minute Secretary of to the Blue - Blueberry Commission.

That the Reference and Counsel of the Blue - Blueberry Commission be Nancy Knox, Matthew Fillier, Ralph Hayman and Betty Kelly.

**Agenda**

That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 accept, as its agenda, the agenda as circulated and approved on the understanding that the agenda may be changed, as necessary, by the action of the General Council, on the recommendation of the Business Committee.

**Unfinished Business**

Unfinished business will be referred to the Executive of the General Council.



## **GS 2 PLENARY CONSENT**

**The General Secretary, General Council proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) approve the requests for action in the following proposals and direct the Executive of the General Council to ensure that such actions are taken as requested in the proposals:**

- **GS 5 Appeal – Calculation of Deadline to Initiate Appeal**
- **GS 6 Minutes of Court Meetings**
- **GS7 Notice of Congregational Meetings re: Amalgamations and Disbanding**
- **GS 8 Members of the Order of Ministry Elected/Appointed to Public Office**
- **GS 11 French translation of *The Manual***
- **GCE 2 – REF MEPS 9 – Police Records Check**
- **GCE 3 – REF MEPS 14 – Congregational Designated Ministry Policy**
- **GCE 4 – REF MEPS 13 – Licensed Lay Worship Leader Policy**
- **GCE 5 – REF - MEPS 19 Sabbaticals For Persons Involved in Interim Ministry (GC41 HAM 10)**
- **GCE 6 – REF MEPS 21 The Pastoral Relations Sabbatical Leave Policy**
- **GCE 7 – REF MEPS 18 - Conference Interviews For Interim Ministers (GC41 TOR 1)**
- **GCE 8 – REF MEPS 23 - Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships**
- **GCESE 1 Amending the Disability Provisions of the Manual**
- **NOM 1 Appointment of the Executive of the General Council**
- **NOM 2 Appointment to the Committees of the General Council**
- **TICIF 1 TICIF Accountability and Future Work**
- **BQ 7 Clarify Section C and D of *The Manual***

## **GS 3 ENACTING REMITS AUTHORIZED BY THE 41ST GENERAL COUNCIL 2012 AND 2013**

**Originating Body: General Secretary, General Council**

**The General Secretary, General Council proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council 2015 enact the following remits authorized by the 41st General Council 2012, all of which have been approved by a majority of the presbyteries:**

**Remit#1: Vacancies in Session, Church Board and Church Council**

**Remit#2: Staff as Lay Members of Presbytery**

**Remit#3: Presbytery Representation from Presbytery Accountable Ministries**

**Remit#4: Transfer and Settlement – Presbytery Recognized Ministries or Presbytery Accountable Ministries**

**Remit#5: Election of Commissioners by Overseas Personnel**

**Remit#6: Associate Relationship with Migrant Church Communities**

**Remit#7: Election of General Council Commissioners – President-Elect/Leading Elders**

**Remit#8: Election of General Council Commissioners – Designated Lay Ministers**

### **Background:**

The following are the voting results for the remits authorized by the 41st General Council 2012:

| Remits to Presbyteries (85) | For | Against |
|-----------------------------|-----|---------|
| Remit #1                    | 74  | NIL     |
| Remit #2                    | 74  | NIL     |
| Remit #3                    | 73  | 1       |
| Remit #4                    | 74  | NIL     |
| Remit #5                    | 72  | 1       |
| Remit #6                    | 64  | 8       |
| Remit #7                    | 70  | NIL     |
| Remit #8                    | 64  | 6       |
| Remit #9                    | 39  | 30      |

Remits #1 to #8 were approved by a majority of the presbyteries. The General Council must now decide whether to enact these approved remits.

## **GS 4 PRIORITIZING OF GENERAL COUNCIL WORK**

**Originating Body: General Secretary, General Council**

**Origin: General Secretary, General Council**

**The General Secretary, General Council proposes:**

- 1) That the 42nd General Council 2015 direct the Executive of the General Council to prioritize all the work of the General Council Office, in order to implement the decisions made by this General Council to the fullest extent possible, having regard to the importance of:**
  - a) Supporting the life and ministries of communities of faith**
  - b) The denomination's role in witnessing to the gospel and teachings of Jesus**
  - c) Focusing at the denominational level on work best done at the denominational level**
  - d) Transitions the church must make to meet to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century**
  - e) Responsible stewardship of the financial and other resources of the United Church**
  
- 2) And that the 42nd General Council 2015 declare that:**
  - a) any decision made by this General Council in response to the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group takes precedence over any other decision made by this General Council, to the extent that the two may be in conflict; and**
  - b) all decisions made by this General Council be understood to include such modifications as may be necessary for consistency with decisions made in response to the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group.**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Executive of the General Council is responsible for ensuring that the decisions and recommendations of the General Council are carried out, and for dealing with matters referred to it by the General Council [Manual section E.4.5.6.b]. The Executive must fulfil this responsibility in the next triennium within the context of a critical financial situation.

The recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group include significant structural and financial changes, including the elimination of presbyteries and Conferences and the creation of regions. The decisions made by this General Council in response to the recommendations may also include significant changes (subject to remit approval where required).

All other decisions made by the General Council will be based on the current structure. In implementing these other decisions, it may be necessary to make modifications so that they comply with any significant structural changes approved by the General Council. For example, a decision that applies to "presbyteries" and "Conferences" would have to be interpreted in light of any approved new structure.

## **CRTG 1 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: CHASING THE SPIRIT**

**Origin:** General Secretary, General Council on behalf of the Comprehensive Review Task Group

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015:**

- (1) commit to supporting new ministries and new forms of ministry through an initiative tentatively called “Chasing the Spirit”; and**
- (2) direct that ten (10%) percent of annual Mission and Service Fund givings be invested in this initiative, with The United Church to begin work immediately towards implementation of this direction, and for it to be fully implemented no later than 2018.**

### **BACKGROUND:**

See pages 170–173 of the [Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group](#).

## **CRTG 2 ABORIGINAL MINISTRIES**

**Origin: The Comprehensive Review Task Group**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015 direct the Executive of the General Council:**

- (1) to establish a process to continue conversations with the Aboriginal ministries that form the Aboriginal Ministries Council to build a relationship based on mutuality, respect, and equity, and to report back no later than GC 43;**
- (2) to maintain funding for Aboriginal ministries at current levels, to the extent possible, during the next triennium while the conversations continue; and**
- (3) to establish a process for developing a model for funding Aboriginal Ministries and Indigenous Justice on a going forward basis.**

### **BACKGROUND:**

See pages 173–176 of the [Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group](#).

## **CRTG 3 A THREE-COUNCIL MODEL**

**Origin: The Comprehensive Review Task Group**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the reorganization of The United Church of Canada from its current four-court structure to a three-council structure consisting of communities of faith, regional councils, and a denominational council as follows:**

### **1. COMMUNITIES OF FAITH**

#### ***A. Description:***

**A community of faith would be any community of people within the United Church that:**

- **gathers to explore faith, worship, and serve, including congregations, outreach ministries, faith-based communal living, house churches, and online communities; and**
- **is recognized as a community of faith within the United Church by the regional council through a covenantal relationship between the community of faith and the regional council.**

#### ***B. Membership***

**The members of the community of faith would be:**

- **people admitted to membership by the community of faith, within the guidelines of the denomination, including members of the order of ministry;**
- **eligible for election to represent the community of faith in the denominational council and regional council;**
- **entitled to vote on all community of faith matters; and entitled to extend the right to vote on financial and administrative matters to adherents.**

#### ***C. Authority and responsibility***

**The community of faith would have authority and responsibility for:**

##### ***mission***

- **entering into a covenant with the regional council with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;**
- **doing annual self-assessments of the ministry of the community of faith and filing the report with the regional council;**

*governance and administration*

- making decisions about the life of the community of faith, including worship, care, spiritual practice, and learning; local administration, finances, and governance, and local mission, justice, and evangelism;
- meeting at least annually;
- complying with denominational and regional policies;
- buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith property;

*spiritual life*

- setting policies for membership, and receiving and celebrating new members in the community of faith;
- helping members deepen their faith while exploring their faith journey;

*ministry and other leadership*

- recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing, and covenanting with ministry personnel and other staff, and ending calls and appointments/covenants with ministry personnel and other staff;
- encouraging members to consider ministry roles a responsibility shared through the whole community of faith;
- recommending to the appropriate body suitable lay members as inquirers, candidates, and licensed lay worship leaders, as and if required under denominational policy;

*participation in regional and denominational life*

- choosing one of the ministry personnel serving the community of faith in paid accountable ministry where applicable, and one other member of the community of faith, to represent the community of faith on the regional council;
- funding the cost of sending representatives to the meetings of the regional council;
- choosing one of the ministry personnel serving the community of faith in paid accountable ministry, where applicable, and one lay member of the community of faith, to represent the community of faith on the denominational council;
- funding the cost of sending representatives to the triennial meeting of the denominational council; and
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from members of the community of faith to regional councils.

*D. Limitations*

All authority and responsibility of the community of faith would be subject to:

- policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council;

- the terms of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council; and
- the authority of the regional council to assume control of the community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

## 2. REGIONAL COUNCILS

### A. Description

A regional council would be a regional decision-making body within the United Church.

### B. Membership

The regional council would be composed of:

- one ministry personnel from each community of faith that has paid accountable ministry personnel
- one lay member from each community of faith within the region

### C. Authority and Responsibility

The regional council would have authority and responsibility for:  
*covenanting:*

- recognizing a new community of faith by entering into a covenantal relationship with it;
- entering into a covenant with each community of faith, with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;

*oversight:*

- reviewing and periodically auditing the self-assessments of communities of faith in light of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council;
- assuming control of a community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational policies;
- overseeing camps and incorporated ministries in the region;

*services to communities of faith:*

- providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in human resource matters;
- providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in dealing with congregational property;
- creating regional policies for buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith and regional property and the distribution of such proceeds;



- **managing regional archives;**
- **providing leadership training for ministers and lay persons as determined regionally;**

*policy and finance:*

- **administering policy set by the denominational council, and setting appropriate regional policy;**
- **receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from communities of faith to the denominational council based on denominational policy;**
- **setting and managing its annual budget and setting any additional regional assessment for any additional services the regional council wishes to undertake;**
- **participating in determining priorities for mission and ministry work through the Mission and Service Fund;**
- **meeting at least annually as the entire regional council or through its executive;**

*ministry personnel and others—except to the extent any of the following responsibilities have been otherwise assigned through the United Church’s legislative process:*

- **celebrating retirements;**
- **appointing persons (i) to accompany a candidate on their pathway to ordination or commissioning, and (ii) to make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to the candidate’s fitness and readiness for ministry;**
- **appointing a person (i) to supervise a candidate in an internship, and (ii) make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to the candidate’s fitness and readiness for ministry;**
- **ordaining or commissioning each candidate approved by the College for ordination;**
- **admitting ministers from other denominations who have been approved by the College for admission;**
- **readmitting ministers who have been approved by the College for readmission;**
- **recognizing designated lay ministers; and**
- **licensing lay members as licensed lay worship leaders.**

*D. Limitations*

All authority and responsibility of the regional council would be subject to:

- **policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council;**

- the terms of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council; and
- the authority of the denominational council to assume control of the regional council in extraordinary circumstances where the regional council is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

#### *E. Staffing*

Each region would have staff to assist the regional council in meeting its responsibilities:

- staffing would be based on assessments, grants from the Mission and Service Fund, and any other regional income;
- staffing would be based on priorities and needs as determined regionally;
- staff would be hired and managed by a regional secretary who reports to the General Secretary of the denominational council; and
- regional councils with more resources would be free to hire more staff, and sharing of all resources across the church would be encouraged.

### 3. DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL

#### *A. Description:*

The denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church as both a denomination and a legal corporation.

#### *B. Membership*

The denominational council would consist of:

- one ministry personnel from each community of faith that has paid accountable ministry personnel, as chosen by the community of faith;
- one lay member of each community of faith, as chosen by the community of faith;
- the presiding officer or elder of each regional council;
- the immediate Past Moderator;
- the retiring Moderator; and
- the General Secretary of the denominational council.

#### *C. Authority and responsibility*

The denominational council would have authority and responsibility for: *policy*:

- setting policies for the denomination on doctrine, worship, membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and the entrance to paid accountable ministry;
- making decisions on denomination-shaping issues relating to public witness;
- dealing with proposals received from regional councils;

*governance:*

- electing a Moderator;
- electing the executive of the denominational council;
- referring all unfinished matters to the executive of the denominational council;
- meeting once every three years in person, with members having the option of participating through electronic or equivalent means;
- meeting more frequently as required by secular law through electronic or equivalent means;
- approving the number and boundaries of regional councils and supporting them;

*finance and administration:*

- setting a three-year budget framework for the church and determining the assessment of communities of faith for the three-year period;
- assisting communities of faith with the cost of sending representatives to the triennial denominational council meeting by setting a standardized fee for the cost and providing bursaries where needed; and
- maintaining the denominational archives.

*D. Limitations*

This proposal does not affect the limitations that exist at the current time:

- *remit*: the Basis of Union may only be changed through the remit process, which requires the approval of a majority of the presbyteries and also, if the General Council considers it advisable because the change is substantive or denomination-shaping, pastoral charges;
- *membership requirements*: no terms of admission to full membership may be prescribed other than those laid down in the New Testament;
- *freedom of worship*: the freedom of worship enjoyed by churches at the time of union in 1925 may not be interfered with in the United Church;
- *property*: all policy on congregational property adopted by the denominational council must comply with the requirements set in The United Church of Canada Act, 1925.

*E. Executive of the denominational council*

The executive of the denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church between meetings of the denominational council, within the following terms of reference:

- **size:** a fixed number between 12 and 18 members, with the exact number set by the denominational council;
- **membership:**
  - the Moderator
  - the General Secretary of the General Council
  - a representative of the Aboriginal Ministries Council
  - lay members and members of the order of ministry elected by the denominational council based on regional council nominations and the need for named competencies as well as Aboriginal, francophone, racialized, and other diverse voices; and
- **authority:**
  - dealing with all unfinished matters referred to it by the denominational council
  - dealing with all routine and emergency work of the denominational council between meetings of the denominational council
  - establishing standing and other committees, with the chair of each such committee to be a member of the executive of the denominational council
  - exercising additional authority and subject to any limitations as set by the denominational council

#### ***F. Staffing***

The denominational council would have staff to assist it in meeting its responsibilities through:

- staffing based on assessments of communities of faith, grants from the Mission and Service Fund, and other denominational income;
- staffing based on the priorities and needs as determined nationally;
- administering denominational policies;
- providing centralized technical services such as information technology, communication, payroll, accounting, human resources, administration, and pension plan;
- supporting the Moderator; and
- providing leadership in global partnerships and national-level ministry and mission work.

## **4. CLUSTERS AND NETWORKS**

Alongside the structure, there would also be:

- **clusters:** local clusters of communities of faith that would provide community and support for communities of faith and their leaders, and focus on worship, mission, learning, collegiality, and strategic planning; and
- **networks:** linking people working on specific issues (e.g. supportive housing, intercultural ministry, youth ministry) or for project work

**(e.g. event planning) that function through the whole church, depending on the issue.**

**And that the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the elimination of the transfer and settlement processes for members of the order of ministry within the United Church, including the elimination of the General Council Transfer Committee and Conference Settlement Committees;**

**And further, that the 42nd General Council 2015 authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the reorganization and polity changes set out above.**

**BACKGROUND:**

See pages 176–179 of the [Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group](#).

## **CRTG 4 A COLLEGE OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** The Comprehensive Review Task Group

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the establishment of a College of Ministers within the General Council [or “denominational council,” if approved through the United Church’s legislative process], based on the following terms of reference, and such other terms as may be set by the General Council [or denominational council]:**

### ***A. Membership***

- **Membership in the College would be mandatory for all members of the order of ministry and designated lay ministers serving in paid accountable ministry in congregations and other communities of faith.**
- **Candidates would be student members.**
- **Ministers seeking admission from other denominations would be associate members after they have been approved to enter the admission process under denominational policy.**
- **Congregations and other communities of faith would only be permitted to call, appoint, or hire people who are members of the College when filling ministry positions.**

### ***B. Authority and responsibility***

- **The College would have authority and responsibility for:**
  - (1) **the assessment of candidates, ministers seeking admission from other denominations, and ministers seeking readmission to ministry in the United Church; and**
  - (2) **the oversight and discipline of ministry personnel and all those described in (1) above, according to policies and standards set by the General Council [or denominational council].**
- **The Conference [or “regional council,” if approved through the United Church’s legislative process] would remain responsible for the ordination and commissioning of members of the order of ministry and recognition of designated lay ministers.**

### ***C. Governance***

**The College would be governed by a 20-member board, with the composition of the board set by denominational policy to include:**

- **equal number of: (1) ministers whether ordained, diaconal, or designated lay ministers and (2) lay people;**

- **ensuring representation of each of ordained, diaconal, and designated lay ministers;**
- **ensuring representation of Aboriginal ministries;**
- **election of lay persons on a regional basis; and**
- **election of ministry representatives by their peers on a regional basis.**

**D. Structure**

**The College would have the following three committees, composed of members of the College Board, with each committee to include at least one minister and one layperson:**

- **Admission and Standards Committee: to assess (1) candidates for ordination or commissioning, and (2) ministers for membership in the College;**
- **Complaints Committee: to assess complaints about ministry personnel, order investigations, order a formal hearing, and determine other appropriate outcomes; and**
- **Hearings Committee: to hold formal hearings of complaints and determine appropriate outcomes. Only the Hearings Committee has authority to place a minister's name on the Discontinued Service List (Disciplinary).**

**And further that the 42nd General Council 2015 authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the establishment of a College of Ministers as set out above.**

**BACKGROUND:**

See pages 179–184 of the [Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group](#).

## **CRTG 5 AN ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Origin: The Comprehensive Review Task Group**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015 direct the Executive of the General Council:**

- (1) to establish a working group consisting of ministry personnel to consider the idea of establishing an Association of Ministers; and
- (2) to receive the report of the working group and to take appropriate action in response.

### **BACKGROUND:**

See pages 184–186 of the [Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group](#).



## **CRTG 6 FUNDING A NEW MODEL**

**Origin: The Comprehensive Review Task Group**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the following principles to guide the budgeting process for The United Church of Canada:**

- (1) Spend only what is received, which will require at least an \$11 million reduction in spending by 2018 from current 2015 spending levels.**
- (2) Determine the number of staff and what they do based on revenues received.**
- (3) Use the Mission and Service Fund to fund only ministry and mission activities.**
- (4) Fund governance and support services (administration), whether at the Conference/presbytery [or “regional council,” if approved through the United Church’s legislative process] or the denominational level, by assessing communities of faith.**
- (5) Share assessments equitably across the whole church. Conference/presbytery [or regional council] would be able to use additional existing resources for regional purposes. Sharing of all resources would be encouraged across the church.**

**And that the 42nd General Council 2015 authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the change set out in sections 4 and 5 above [funding through assessing communities of faith].**

**And further, that the Executive of the General Council be directed and authorized to take the actions necessary to finalize and implement the new model based on the above principles, to the extent permissible pending the outcome of this remit.**

### **BACKGROUND:**

See pages 186–191 of the [Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group](#).

## **CRTG 7 REMITS / MEETING OF THE 43<sup>RD</sup> GENERAL COUNCIL**

**Origin: The Comprehensive Review Task Group**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015:**

- (1) waive the requirement for 24 months' study and information sharing before the return date of the following remits, in order to allow for an earlier return deadline for presbyteries and pastoral charges:**
  - Comprehensive Review: Three Council Structure**
  - Comprehensive Review: College of Ministers**
  - Comprehensive Review: New Funding Model**
  - Comprehensive Review: Change in Governance from The United Church of Canada Act to the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act**
- (2) advance the date of the regular meeting of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council from 2018 to September 15, 2017, or such other date named by the Executive of the General Council, so that the results of these remits may then be reported to the General Council and, if the remits have been approved, a decision made whether to enact them;**
- (3) direct that the regular meeting of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council be held electronically; and**
- (4) authorize test projects for the Three Council Structure and College of Ministers to begin immediately, with participation to be voluntary, and the Executive of the General Council to provide direction for and oversight of the testing.**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The four remits listed above are all Category 3 remits, which are remits sent to both presbyteries and pastoral charges.

Under *The Manual*, the return date for a Category 3 remit must be set so that it allows presbyteries and pastoral charges at least 24 months of study and information sharing before the deadline. This requirement ensures that presbyteries and pastoral charges are given an opportunity to learn about the issues raised in the remit and to engage in conversation about them before voting.

For the first three proposals listed above, this objective has already been met. The Comprehensive Review Task Group shared two discussion papers with the wider church on preliminary restructuring and funding concepts in 2013 and 2014 and later made its final report available to congregations and presbyteries along with accompanying material to help them explore the task group's recommendations. An additional period of 24 months' study would be redundant.

The fourth proposal concerns a change that would eliminate the requirement for the United Church to get approval from Parliament to reorganize into a three-council model or for other restructurings in future.

Any policy change approved by a Category 3 remit may only be implemented if enacted by the next General Council. Normally, the General Council holds its regular meeting every third year. It has authority to advance the meeting date to the second year if it considers the circumstances exceptional.

The changes proposed in these remits address serious and urgent financial circumstances facing the United Church. It is critical to know the will of the church on these particular changes as soon as possible to allow for their implementation if approved or, if not, to allow the church to determine another course of action.

## **GS 9 MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF MINISTRY**

**Origin: General Secretary of General Council**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The General Secretary proposes that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council:**

- 1. Approve the establishment of mutual recognition of ministry with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea,**
- 2. Direct the General Secretary to conclude and implement these mutual recognition of ministry agreements as approved by the Executive of General Council,**
- 3. Establish in The United Church Manual, the category of “ministry partner” for ministers of denominations within mutual recognition agreements, with eligibility for call or appointment within the United Church of Canada as determined by the specific contents of the agreements,**
- 4. Authorize a Category 2 remit to test the will of the church that ministry partners, while under appointment or call are full members of Presbytery, and equivalent to ordered ministers of The United Church of Canada in respect to membership and responsibilities in the courts of the church; and**
- 5. Authorize the Executive of General Council to approve subsequent mutual recognition of ministry agreements.**

### **Background**

The Executive of General Council in May 2012 authorized the General Secretary to initiate bilateral conversations towards Mutual Recognition of Ministry agreements. They directed that these conversations include if possible a Canadian denomination, one U.S. based denomination, and a number of global or overseas denominations. More extensive material on the meaning of mutual recognition of ministry and the rationale for entering into them can be found in the Report entitled [Mission and Ministry with Migrant Churches](#).

Conversations were formerly initiated with two global partner denominations that are the subject of this proposal. As the report of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee indicates, the focus of Anglican-United Church dialogue is now on mutual recognition of ministry, a conversation that will likely extend through the next triennium. The proposal for full communion with the United Church of Christ (USA), which will eventually encompass mutual recognition of ministries, emerged out of this initial proposal.

It is important to understand these initiatives have also come from the recognition of the changing character of the global church. The global context for Mutual Recognition of Ministry, Associate Relationships and the Full Communion proposal are found in the document [\*Mission and Ministry with Migrant Churches\*](#) found in the REPORTS section of the workbook.

In May 2014, the Executive gave approval in principle to a [\*Memorandum of Understanding for the mutual recognition of ministries with the United Church of Christ of the Philippines\*](#) and in March 2015 approved in principle the [\*Memorandum of Understanding for the mutual recognition of ministries with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea\*](#). These agreements are found in the REPORTS section from pages 41-53. In June 2014, the General Assembly of The United Church of Christ of the Philippines approved in principle the mutual recognition of ministries agreement with the United Church of Canada. The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea will receive the proposal for mutual recognition of ministries at their General Assembly in September 2015.

Through mutual recognition of ministry, The United Church of Canada and the respective churches enter into an ecumenical partnership that *recognizes* the ordained or ordered ministries of both denominations (the ordained and commissioned (diaconal) ministries of The United Church of Canada, and the equivalent ministries of the PROK and the UCCP); and *establishes* the framework where ordained and commissioned ministers of each denomination can have mutual authorization for exercising all the prerogatives of ministry in each other's congregations.

In so doing the UCC and the partner churches affirm each other's ministries as true ministries of the one, holy Church of Jesus Christ, blessed by God and called to provide leadership in the church through word and sacrament, pastoral care and education.

In entering this agreement, the churches affirm their desire to give visible expression to the prayer of Jesus "that they all may be one." (John 17:21) Because of this, we believe that we are "no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him", we believe "the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord." (Ephesians 2:19-21)

**The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea** and The United Church of Canada, from the foundation of the PROK in 1953, and in their respective bodies long before that time, have been partners in mission. The Presbyterian Church in Korea was established in 1907, but the division which created the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) was forced when the majority Presbyterian Church could not accept the more liberal theology being taught by some Korean (and a Canadian) professors, and espoused by churches whose clergy had studied under them. They were ordered to recant on a charge of heresy, but refused and, leaving, formed the PROK. The United Church was the sole partner denomination choosing to continue to stay in relationship with the PROK in that division.

United Church overseas personnel and its predecessors since the first days have served the PROK in education, medical, social service, administrative, and other fields. Canadians were a significant presence in the liberation struggles of Korea, during the Japanese occupation of 1910-

1945, and the dictatorship days of the 1970s and 80s. United Church theological reflections on mission and ecumenism have been greatly enriched by Korea's *minjung* theology. The churches continue to work closely together in justice and peace issues, including most recently shared work on empire and economic justice

The Korean population in Canada is now the fourth largest in the world outside Korea and continuing to grow significantly. The UCC is deeply concerned about connecting with this growing Korean population so that it might receive their gifts and be transformed into a church that would better serve God's purposes in the new Canadian reality.

The PROK is concerned for its Korean members now resident in Canada and desires to find ways of continuing to support them pastorally. The PROK also recognizes the growing Canadian and English speaking population in Korea and desires that there be opportunities to share in ministry with The United Church of Canada to this community.

The UCC acknowledges the presence of many Korean ministers and congregations already within the ministry of the United Church. This Mutual Recognition Agreement will expand the possibilities for leadership in these and in new congregations as well as the possibilities for United Church ministers to gain valuable experience serving in the PROK for a time.

The PROK acknowledges that this agreement will provide opportunity for some of their ministers to gain experience and skills in leadership in ministry that might otherwise not be available in Korea. Ministers may gain expanded opportunities for congregational leadership and experience of inter-cultural and multi faith communities and families.

Both denominations believe that a mutual recognition of ministries is one step of greater cooperation towards the objective of sharing together in God's mission.

**The United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP)** and The United Church of Canada have been in a partner relationship for over 30 years. The foundation of the UCCP comes from the union in 1948, of five distinct church denominations, Presbyterian, United Brethren, Philippine Methodist, Disciples of Christ, Congregational each rooted in North America, into one church rooted in the Philippines. Since that defining moment, the UCCP continues to be a church negotiating national diversity and redefining international relations in a quest to become one truly united church.

This relationship between the United Church of Christ of the Philippines and The United Church of Canada was formally structured in a Covenant of Partnership signed in 1994. This partnership in mission has emerged from the historic missionary movement to current expressions of the sharing of mission personnel and resources, mutual accountability and common witness. Both denominations are committed to deepening their commitments to new forms and expressions of partnership in the world so that God's people and God's world may be blessed. Both recognize that the world has changed remarkably in the last two generations. The Filipino population in Canada is now the third largest in the world outside the Philippines and continuing to grow significantly. The UCC is deeply concerned about connecting with this growing

population so that it might receive their gifts and be transformed into a church that would better serve God's purposes in the new Canadian reality.

The UCCP is concerned for its Filipino members now resident in Canada and desires to find ways of continuing to support them pastorally. The UCCP further recognizes that there are no clear policies, nor ordered procedure for UCCP pastors immigrating to Canada and the United States and seeking church assignments. The potential loss of pastors is a deep concern for the church and therefore it welcomes this agreement as a way of mutually establishing a more orderly system of procedures.

The UCC acknowledges the presence of Filipino ministers, people and congregations already within the ministry of the United Church. This Mutual Recognition Agreement expands the possibilities for leadership in these and in new congregations as well as the possibilities for United Church ministers to gain valuable experience serving in the UCCP for a time. The UCCP also desires that the gifts of both Filipino and non-Filipino ministers of The United Church of Canada might offer gifts of ministry and service to the UCCP in the Philippines.

The Churches believe that this agreement will provide opportunity for their ministers and ministerial students to gain experience and skills in leadership in ministry that might otherwise not be available in their home contexts. Both churches believe that a mutual recognition of ministries is one step of greater cooperation towards the objective of sharing together in God's mission.

**GS 10 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: CHANGE IN GOVERNANCE  
FROM THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA ACT TO THE  
CANADA NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATIONS ACT**

**Origin:** General Secretary, General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The General Secretary, General Council proposes that**

**the 42nd General Council 2015:**

- (1) approve the change in governance of The United Church of Canada as a legal corporation from The United Church of Canada Act to the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act;**
- (2) confirm that in The United Church of Canada, for corporate legal purposes only (as distinct from church membership):**
  - (i) the commissioners of the General Council are the “members” of the corporation; and**
  - (ii) the members of the Executive of the General Council are the “directors” of the corporation; and**
- (3) authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to this change.**

**[Note: this proposal requires approval by a 2/3 majority of the General Council under CNCA requirements.]**

**Background:**

1. The United Church of Canada Act

The United Church of Canada was established as a legal corporation by legislation of the Parliament of Canada in a special federal statute, The United Church of Canada Act (the “UCC Act”), in 1925.

The UCC Act provides the United Church with a customized set of governance rules designed to serve the context in 1925. These rules, however, do not legally permit the United Church to re-organize itself or make fundamental changes to structural components covered in the Basis of Union without the approval of the Parliament of Canada.



In the 21st century, it seems incredible that the United Church is required to seek and obtain the approval of Parliament in order to make fundamental changes to its own structure and governance. This would be a time-consuming process, and the outcome would depend on the will of Parliament.

2. Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act: a new governance option

The United Church now has another option for making fundamental governance changes through the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act (“CNCA”).

The CNCA is a new federal statute that contains governance requirements for all not-for-profit corporations incorporated under federal law in Canada.

Special act corporations like the United Church may choose to move to governance under the CNCA. If the United Church made that choice, it could then use the process under the CNCA for making fundamental governance changes. The approval of Parliament would no longer be required.

Governance under the CNCA would provide additional benefits. The CNCA rules are modern, simpler, flexible and better suited to the needs of not-for-profit corporations today. They would offer the United Church more agility in responding to the need for governance changes as they arose while still requiring the United Church to follow rules that ensure wider church participation on fundamental matters. These rules are also more easily understood by governments, financial institutions, and others who may interact with the United Church. They also provide more clarity on the legal rights and responsibilities for those serving in corporate leadership roles, and make it easier to address non-compliance with governance rules.

In short, governance under the CNCA would better align the church with the corporate realities of the 21st century.

3. Corporate members and directors of the United Church

Under the CNCA, a not-for-profit corporation must have “members” and “directors”. The members hold responsibilities such as attending and voting at the annual general meeting, electing the directors and approving any by-law changes or other fundamental changes to the corporation. The directors are responsible for managing affairs of the corporation.

Within the United Church, the commissioners to the General Council hold rights and responsibilities most equivalent to “members” of a corporation. This is “membership” for corporate law purposes only, and is entirely different from church membership in local congregations or as ordered ministers.

The General Council elects the Executive of the General Council, which oversees the United Church’s affairs between meetings of the General Council. Within the United

Church, the members of the Executive of the General Council are most equivalent to the “directors” of a corporation. The United Church has functioned on that understanding for many years, naming the Executive of the General Council as its board of directors in documents filed regularly with government authorities.

If the General Council approves the move to governance under the CNCA, it would also need to confirm who serves as the corporate members and directors of the United Church.

4. The United Church of Canada Act – provincial legislation

The federal UCC Act deals with many matters including denominational and congregational property. In Canada, property matters fall under provincial rather than federal jurisdiction. For that reason, each of the nine provinces in Canada in 1925 adopted parallel legislation that was very similar to the federal UCC Act. If the United Church moves to governance under the CNCA, the implications on the provincial acts would have to be addressed as part of the implementation.

For more information on the CNCA, see the Industry Canada website:

<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cd-dgc.nsf/eng/cs05170.html>

## **GCE 1 FULL COMMUNION AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST (USA)**

**Origin: The Executive of General Council**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of General Council proposes that:**

- 1. The 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada, meeting in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador (August 8-15, 2015) make the following mutual declaration with the 30th General Synod of the United Church of Christ, meeting in Cleveland, Ohio (26-30 June 2015):**
- 2. That the 42nd General Council *Acknowledge and celebrate* before God that the United Church of Christ (USA) is an authentic, faithful part of the one, universal body of Christ.**
- 3. *Declare and celebrate* that a relationship of full communion now exists between The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA), by which is meant that both churches will pursue with intention ways of expressing the unity of the Church. This includes commitment to mutually recognizing ordained ministers of each partner church as truly ministers of word and sacrament, and ways of manifesting the common mission of witness and service.**
- 4. *Commit* itself to work, with God's help and together with its partner churches, to effect greater unity in the whole church of Jesus Christ, and**

**Together with the United Church of Christ;**

- 5. *Encourage* study of the biblical, theological, and practical implications of the full communion agreement,**
- 6. *Direct* the General Secretary, General Council to work collaboratively with the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ to establish a United Church Partnership Committee to give guidance to this process,**
- 7. *Receive* the final report of the joint full communion working group, including the possibilities presented for common life and witness together, and**
- 8. *Agree* to commence the full communion agreement with the signing of the common agreement by the two Heads of Communion at a joint service of celebration that will include opportunities for local congregations and conferences across the two churches to celebrate in meaningful ways.**

## Background

The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA) share a rich and similar history as “united and uniting” churches in North America. While the two churches share common heritage and values, both churches recognize that greater opportunities for shared common witness can be explored in the context of a full communion agreement. The 30th General Synod (2013) of the United Church of Christ (USA) and the Executive of General Council (November, 2013) therefore directed that work be undertaken to explore the possibility of such an agreement.

The United Church of Christ (USA) currently has three full communion agreements, each of which is an expression of visible unity, while exhibiting unique elements that define the relationship between the partners.<sup>1</sup> The experience of the United Church of Christ therefore brought to this discussion a significant history that assisted in the exploration and meaning of a full communion agreement. This proposal comes after a year of study and engagement by representatives of both churches, charged with returning to General Council 2015 and General Synod 2015 a common document. The group of twelve (six from each church), determined that the churches, while similarly engaged, could learn from each other in ways that would enhance their mission and ministry in their respective contexts.

This resolution is a beginning that invites The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ to explore and give vision to living in full communion in the twenty-first century and beyond. This is a vision of oneness in Christ.

Because the gospel of Jesus Christ unites Christ's followers in a single community of faith and compels us to make our unity visible so "that the world may believe..." (John 17:21, cf. Eph. 4:4-6, 1 Cor. 12:12-26);

Because, the United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada have common ecumenical partners, vision of the Church, commitment to social justice, the inclusion of all persons, and to a diverse theological expressions;

Because, the United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada in our local churches, Conferences, and in national and international settings are witnessing significant signs of the movement of the Holy Spirit toward unity;

Because, the United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada entered into a year of common discernment to seek God's will and direction for ways to live as the one body of Christ;

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<sup>1</sup> The UCC(USA) has in a full communion agreement, includes mutual recognition of ministries, with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and two larger agreements across a number of denominations in the United States.

Therefore the joint partnership committee in common agreement and spirit, offer this recommendation that a full communion agreement be established between our two churches.

### **Biblical, Theological and Ethical Rational**

In his last prayer with his disciples, Jesus prayed, “that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (John 17:21, NRSV). The desire for unity and visible unity is at the heart and commitment of the ecumenical movement.

The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA) affirm this biblical understanding of unity which continues to guide the ecumenical commitment and engagement with other churches. The churches continue to seek meaningful ways to attend to the call in the gospel and to overcome the separations that stand in the way of the unity of the church that Jesus prayed for. As Christians there is an imperative to find ways to live in unity and to create visible unity for the life of the Church. This call is the essence of the ecumenical movement which seeks to find unity-in-diversity, creating the space to engage divergences and convergences through on-going dialogue and engagement.

Both churches were created by organic union and live into being “united and uniting” churches. The United Church of Canada was formed in 1925, united through the merger of the Methodist Church of Canada, two-thirds of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Congregational Church of Canada. In 1968, the Evangelical United Brethren joined in the union. Formed in 1957, the United Church of Christ (USA) brought together the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches, both of which were products of earlier mergers. The moment of organic union was not to be experienced as an end, but as a beginning, opening to a realm of possibilities to receive the oneness Jesus prayed for.

The establishment of a joint partnership committee followed two intentional meetings of the staff leadership of both communions. The joint partnership committee was charged to explore the possibility for full communion between The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA), and to bring to the General Synod and the General Council in 2015 a full communion agreement.

The two churches envision full communion as a dynamic and growing relationship that is more than just accepting one another as we now are. It is a mutual commitment to grow together toward a vision of the church that enriches our theological traditions, enhances service and mission, and deepens worship. The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA) will find diverse expressions of what it means to live in full communion in Christ as we experience life together.

Unity and mission are inseparable. If the United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada imagine being sacramentally one and do not engage together in mission, we deceive ourselves. Christ calls us to unite in one mission in and to a suffering and divided world. The church is called to visible oneness as a sign, instrument and foretaste of God's saving reconciliation of all things in Christ. In declaring full communion, these two churches acknowledge that they are partners together in God's mission to and for the whole world.

The mission of the church takes many forms. The church engages in mission through worship, through proclamation of the gospel, and through action. In worship, the church recalls and celebrates the mighty acts of God in creation, redemption, and providence. Thus graciously renewed in faith, hope, and love, its people are sent out in the power of the Holy Spirit to be ambassadors, witnesses, and servants of Christ in the world. In proclamation, the church tells the story by which its own life is defined. As it confesses unambiguously the Christ in whom it lives; the church invites all who will to enter its fellowship of life in Christ. In its action, the church embodies God's justice, peace, and love. As the church reaches out to others, both individually and systemically, it manifests God's reconciling purpose and saving reign in all the earth.

In partnership, The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA) fully claim the mission and make deliberate commitment to engage in mission together, wherever and whenever possible.

Members of the Joint Partnership Committee:

**United Church of Christ:**

Susan E. Davies  
David Greenhaw  
Campbell Lovett  
Bernice Powell Jackson  
Karen Georgia Thompson (staff)

**United Church of Canada:**

Mark Toulouse  
Danielle Ayana James  
Daniel Hayward  
Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa  
Bruce Gregersen (staff)

Accompanying the work of the committee:

General Minister and President  
Geoffrey Black

General Secretary  
Nora Sanders

For the Report of the Joint Partnership Committee please go to: [Full Communion Report](#) and [Appendix A in the Reference Library](#)

## **GCESE 2 PROPOSAL ON RECONCILIATION**

**Originating Body: Sub-Executive of the Executive of the General Council**

**Financial Implications: none**

**Staffing Implications: Staff of the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools and the Aboriginal Ministries Circle**

**Source of Funding: Existing Budgets of Aboriginal Ministries Circle and the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools**

**The Sub-executive of the Executive of General Council proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- 1. Re-affirm its long term commitment to reconciliation and the building of right relations among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples;**
- 2. Receive the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and commend them to the Executive of the General Council for consideration and Action;**
- 3. Direct the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools and the General Secretary to work along with the Aboriginal Ministries Council to provide leadership to the wider church in the development of strategies and materials that will assist the church in supporting, educating, and implementing where appropriate, the Calls to Action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on June 2, 2015.**
- 4. Encourage wherever possible, collaborative initiatives and actions on the Calls to Action with ecumenical partners such as KAIROS and the Canadian Council of Churches, Indigenous organizations, and the parties to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement;**
- 5. Encourage congregations to engage in education and action for reconciliation.**

### **Background:**

Over the past 30 years, the United Church has become increasingly aware of the profoundly destructive and ongoing impacts of the Indian residential school system and of colonization on Indigenous cultures, languages, families, communities and nations. In response, the church offered an apology to First Nations Peoples in 1986 and to former students of United Church Indian Residential Schools and their families and communities in 1998.

In its attempt to live out those apologies, the United Church has identified reconciliation amongst Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples as a priority and has committed itself to right relations initiatives and education. Our church also actively supported the creation and implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada under the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement.

In its summary report, **Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future**, released on June 2, 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission states “... *apologies made on behalf of institutions or governments may be graciously received but are also understandably viewed with some skepticism.*” And that, “(A)pologies mark only a beginning point on pathways of reconciliation; the proof of their authenticity lies in putting words into action”. That action will require ongoing “commitment to educate church congregations..”. (pg. 276)

Following the presentation of the Commission’s report, the United Church joined with other churches in a common statement welcoming the Calls to Action. Our church also joined in a statement with the other parties to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement pledging to continue to work together on reconciliation after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s mandate ends.



## **TICIF 2 A PROPOSAL FOR ONE ORDER OF MINISTRY**

**Origin:** Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee proposes:**

**THAT the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council recognize one order of ministry within The United Church of Canada, known as the ordained ministry:**

- 1. provide within the ordained ministry of the church, for those who so choose through an appropriate educational program, ordination to the diakonia;**
- 2. develop multiple paths of educational formation to the ordained ministry based on an overall equivalency of educational and spiritual formation;**
- 3. authorize a Category 3 remit to Presbyteries and to Pastoral Charges to test the will of the United Church with respect to this recognition;**
- 4. incorporate (grandparent) into the ordained ministry all diaconal ministers;**
- 5. direct the General Secretary to establish a process to incorporate into the ordained ministry designated lay ministers currently serving in recognized or accountable ministries;**
- 6. Direct the General Secretary to edit the Statement on Ministry to reflect the decision of the church in regards to this proposal.**

### **Background**

The Executive of General Council, meeting March 21-23, 2015, received this report of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, expressed its appreciation for the Committee in the development of the report, and recommended the report and its proposals to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council for approval.

The Permanent Committee, Ministry and Employment Policies and Services and the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, (the Committees) following the directions of the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council (2012), have continued in a long process of exploring critical issues related to Paid Accountable Ministry in The United Church of Canada. The Committees have tested in surveys and workshops assumptions that the issues identified here are significant and need to be resolved; that what is at stake relates to the integrity of the church's ministry; and that current practices cannot continue without damage to the ministry and ministers of the church.

At the heart of these issues is the identity and functioning (as expressed in the Statement on Ministry 2012), of: Designated Lay ministers, who "are members of the church called to exercise gifts for leadership in mission and ministry that respond to a need within a local congregation or community ministry"; Diaconal ministers, who "serve in all aspects of ministry and are formally called to education, service, social justice, and pastoral care"; Ordained ministers, who "serve in all aspects of ministry and are formally called to word, sacrament and pastoral care", and paid staff in other forms of lay ministry.

The Committees have developed this proposal believing that the current definitions and expressions of ministry do not have theological integrity, and cannot be explained simply and theologically to ourselves and to others.

The Committees have noted that most of the ministry personnel of the church, in spite of the purported differences between the streams, are called or appointed to the same function (i.e. solo pastoral ministry). It also believes that most members of the church do not understand the differences between the various streams of ministry, and that candidacy processes in many cases have not been able to adequately differentiate between them. (In 2014 there were 1709 Ordained ministers of which 1543 were in pastoral appointments; 141 Diaconal ministers of which 125 were in pastoral appointments; and 143 recognized (and 75 applicants) Designated Lay ministers in pastoral appointments.)

Finally, the Committees have heard in numerous surveys the expectation of an educated clergy at the heart of the identity of the church. They note however the tension between this desire and the need for ministry personnel to serve small, part time or remote churches. The Committees believe that these needs must be held in tension, but fundamentally the church cannot sacrifice the expectation that all ministers of the church should have a basic equivalency in educational preparation for ministry leadership.

### **The Problem in Greater Detail**

The Statement on Ministry (2012), offers a theological reference point for understanding ministry in The United Church of Canada. It outlines in three sections: the Ministry of All (the ministry of the whole people of God); the Ministry of Leadership (those both paid and unpaid, who serve in many aspects of oversight and leadership in the church); and Paid Accountable Ministry (those who are called to designated lay, diaconal, or ordained ministries.) This report deals with the third category of Paid Accountable Ministry.

The Permanent Committee, Ministry and Employment Policy and Services and the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee were tasked to examine two proposals related to the Statement directed to them by the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council (2012). The first of these issues related to the proposal for the study of “local ordination” as an alternative to the existing category of designated lay ministers (DLMs) serving in pastoral ministry roles. The second involved a proposal for the sacramental authorization of diaconal ministers as a rite of commissioning. The Committees, through a Joint Working Group determined that an underlying issue present in both assignments is the church’s lack of clarity in its current multiple streams of ministry and the complexity and confusion that they create.

The processes that lead to the first version of the Statement on Ministry in 2009 (The Meaning of Ministry Task Group 2006-2009) pointed to the difficulties the church has in differentiating the various streams of ministry. That Task Group struggled to give adequate definition to the streams and found particular difficulty in articulating a difference between designated lay ministry and ordained ministry. It noted the challenge in defining “lay” in the Designated Lay Ministry category and particularly rejected definitions that emphasized designated lay ministry as having a closer relationship to people than those who were commissioned or ordained. Of significant concern was the clear statement of many designated lay ministers themselves that the current definition does not represent their self-understanding and that many find the name itself offensive, and therefore unacceptable.

In the current process (2012-2015) the Joint Working Group of the Committees was also challenged to differentiate the three streams of ministry.

The Working Group noted that the proposal for *local ordination* was an attempt to resolve the difficulty present in designated lay ministers serving in pastoral ministry in ways indistinguishable from ordained

ministry. Many DLM personnel speak of their life-time commitment to ministry within the whole church that arises from a deep and personal call to ministry. Most are authorized for sacraments and, while still requiring yearly appointments, are effectively functioning as if available for call. Recent decisions have also extended the option for life-time membership in Presbytery to those retiring designated lay ministers who request it.

The Committees heard and agreed with challenges to the concept of local ordination; particularly that the “local” in local ordination was not clear or enforceable. It also noted concern over the differences in educational preparation for designated lay ministry and ordered ministry.

The Committees also noted the importance of considering what forms of educational preparation are required for effective leadership in paid accountable ministry today and for the future. They believe that the inability to effectively differentiate commissioned/ordained and designated lay ministry could ultimately situate the DLM program as the basic level of educational preparation for ministry.

However, Designated Lay Ministry was developed with an understanding that it *would* be time limited and localized. “Ministry Together” (GC 2000) set in place the criteria for Designated Lay Ministry as follows:

“The report offers the perspective that the vocation of the Ordained or Diaconal Minister involves lifelong service and accountability to the church. It is ordination or commissioning to the church universal. The vocation of the lay minister, on the other hand, is spontaneous, localized, and temporary in its service and accountability. This report affirms that there is a place for designated lay ministry alongside ordered ministry. Given the demands of ministry today, the church needs to be confident that the spiritual, theological, interpersonal, and educational competencies are the same for comparable ministries.” (Page 614 Record of Proceedings GC 2000).”

Because of this, the DLM educational program was also more limited than other programs. However, designated lay ministers themselves as well as significant parts of the church have affirmed that a different understanding has emerged: that designated lay ministry is now seen as a life time call serving the whole church. This understanding was also affirmed by the 2009 General Council in the changes made to the Statement on Ministry. If designated lay ministry is now understood to be a life time vocation to ministry, serving the whole church, then the Committees believe that the educational requirements must change.

As it was expressed by the Ministry Together report above, the Committees believe that the church does want to be assured that the “spiritual, theological, interpersonal and educational competencies are the same for comparable ministries.” The Committees believe that there needs to be a variety of educational paths to ministry leadership, as will be further outlined. This will include a stream of educational preparation that lifts up the circle and experiential model of the current DLM program. However, the Committees believe that there needs to be a basic educational equivalency between these different paths.

The Committees similarly struggled with the difference between ordained and diaconal, particularly given the request referred from the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council, that diaconal ministers be afforded sacramental authority as a rite of commissioning.

While there are possible distinctions in emphasis and in training, and certainly in the intentional identification with the world-wide *diakonia* movement for diaconal ministers, the challenge is articulating functional and theological differences between the ordained and diaconal ministries as they live out their specific call to ministry in the church today. The Working Group particularly had difficulty with anecdotal comparisons between the two ordered streams: of ordination focused on power and authority in comparison

to diaconal commitments to mutuality and empowerment; or of diaconal ministry as lacking theological depth or missing the skills for overall congregational leadership.

In considering the proposal for authorizing diaconal ministers for the sacraments as a rite of their commissioning, the Committees note that a large majority of diaconal ministers are serving in pastoral ministry roles, often as solo paid accountable ministers, in ways that are functionally indistinguishable from ordained ministers. While the training and commitment of diaconal ministers is focused on teaming and mutuality in ministry, their opportunities to serve in team ministry positions within the United Church are limited (and dwindling). Other diaconal ministers serve in community ministries where sacramental actions, such as gathering around the common table in communion, or being able to baptize individuals when serving in a housing or health-care facility as a chaplain or outreach minister, are important options within worship experiences in those settings.

The Committees note that the Statement on Ministry chose not to distinguish between streams of ministry by sacramental authority. It did so because of the long established patterns in the church of extending authorization for sacramental ministry to those in many forms of pastoral leadership, including most recently sacraments elders. While authorization for sacraments for all those who are not in ordained ministry is still required, the practice of almost universal approval in most conferences, particularly for diaconal and designated lay ministers in solo pastoral ministry, suggests that the church has moved well beyond the more traditional understanding that authority for the sacraments resides solely with the ordained ministry. For this reason, the Committees believe that authorization for sacramental ministries should be extended to diaconal ministers as a rite of commissioning. However such a position reinforces that challenge in distinguishing diaconal and ordained ministry.

The Committees acknowledge that diaconal ministry is more than a question of what functions are performed. *The Working Group on Diaconal Ministry*, which recently reported to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services, noted that educational formation for the diakonia emphasizes teaming, mutuality and non-hierarchical style, with commitment to justice, diversity, and at its heart a rootedness in community and transformation. The report affirmed that “while these characteristics are not exclusive to diaconal ministry, they are characteristics explicitly associated with a diaconal identity and approach to the practice of ministry.”

The long ecumenical history of the diakonia, its foundations in the scriptures and in the early church, and its ongoing support within the United Church, suggested to the Committees that a diaconal option and emphasis in both study and function should continue in some form. The Committees believe, however, that this would best be done as part of one ordained ministry. This is particularly important as we move into consideration of mutual recognition of ministry with partner churches.

The work of the Comprehensive Review Task Group reinforces the reality that we will be a much different church in the future. We will likely be smaller, more congregational and will need to be more effective in our use of resources. We must be more open to diversity while greatly simplifying our structures and our polity. This proposal for “one order of ministry” represents the desire of the Committees to prepare the ministry of the church for such a future. In particular, the committees believe that the move to one order of ministry does not reduce the diversity of ministries within the church, but rather opens a unified ministry up to much greater diversity; in other words, one ministry, many different expressions.

### **The Proposal: One Order of Ministry**

*“The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,*

*until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way unto him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love." Ephesians 4:11-16*

*"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All of these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses." 1 Corinthians 12:4-11*

The Scripture passages above point to a number of principles underlying the thinking of the Permanent Committee, Ministry and Employment Policy and Services and the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, in making this proposal for one order of ministry. They wish to affirm that there is a fundamental unity to all expressions of paid accountable ministry in the church; that the church's understandings of ministry need to be as consistent as possible with a global ecumenical consensus; that interpretations of the nature and function of ministry within the church need to be able to be expressed simply, clearly and with theological integrity; and that a commitment to an educated clergy capable of equipping people to live out their faith in meaningful, loving and mature ways is fundamental to United Church identity.

The Committees propose the following understanding of ministry within The United Church of Canada:

**There shall be one order of ministry of The United Church of Canada, known as the ordained ministry. The rite of ordination in the United Church includes for those who so choose, through the appropriate educational processes, ordination to the diakonia.**

The Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry document of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, published in 1982, remains the most significant consensus document on the nature of ministry in the global Christian community. The centrality of the term "ordination" within the Ministry section of that document provides the strongest rationale for maintaining the term within The United Church of Canada. The document references a traditional three-fold pattern of ordination for bishop, presbyter and deacon. In reformed traditions, the document notes, the episcopal role of the bishop is carried by councils. This is the understanding and practice of the United Church. Throughout the history of the church, the place of deacons or the diakonia has changed as well, but there is significant historical precedent for speaking of ordination to the diaconate.

The proposal for one order offers a return to this understanding. Those who choose to be ordained to the diakonia would prepare themselves through a specific educational path and would commit themselves to the values and principles of the worldwide movement of the diakonia. They will be ordained ministers of the church who offer a commitment to uphold the values and principles of the historic global community of the diakonia. While more detail will have to be developed about the nature of this commitment and the

language that will accompany it, for all those ordained ministers who make such a commitment, and for those who do not, there will no difference in respect to authority and function within the church.

### **Staff Associates**

In this proposal, the Committees also affirm the continued valid place of Staff Associates in the overall ministry of churches. Staff Associates are lay people (their membership remains in a congregation) who are congregationally employed and always function in relationship with an ordained minister or ordained minister candidate.

The Committees note that Designated Lay Ministry, initiated in 2000, was an attempt to incorporate into one category a broad range of “lay” ministries in the church, among them Lay Pastoral Ministers and Staff Associates. The Working Group has heard and accepted that the grouping of this broad collection of paid accountable positions into one category has not been satisfactory for most of the personnel. It believes that the proposal for one order of ministry addresses the challenges in the situation of Designated Lay Ministers serving in solo pastoral ministry who are responding to a life-long call to the vocation of ministry that is not limited to a specific place and time. It proposes a return to a familiar language and practice for those who were formerly called staff associates. The further implication of this proposal would be that “Congregational Designated Ministry” would end and be subsumed into the Staff Associate category.

The emphasis in this category of ministry would be on “associate.” In other words, those functioning in a staff associate position would always be understood to be functioning in association (or team) with an ordained minister or candidate. Staff associates would continue to be lay persons meaning that their membership would continue to reside in a congregation and the call and definition of their work would be focused on, and limited to that local ministry.

In the current terminology, these positions would also be congregational designated positions, or those employed and accountable to the congregation. While these positions will need to meet standards of employment, the congregation will be the sole employer.

The Committees note that the majority of staff associates will be congregational accountable; among them Christian Education workers, pastoral visitors and caregivers, parish nurses, youth workers and music directors. There is, however, an important exception that needs to be considered: those who see themselves functioning as a “staff associate” but who have sought out specialized training and preparation for a particular expression of their ministry. Examples of this would be youth workers who have completed specialized programs, or Christian education workers with a Masters of Religious Education. In these circumstances there has been a desire for some process of recognition of the specialized training that they have undertaken. The Committees’ encouragement is that such individuals see the ordained ministry as expansive and able to incorporate such specialized ministry. This will be increasingly true as new expressions of faith communities emerge. Ministry leadership in these new expressions should be seen to be a full part of the ordained ministry of the church.

The proposal then recognizes two stages of ordained ministry, as ordained candidate and as ordained. The intention is that everyone who is in paid and accountable pastoral leadership of a community of faith must be approved through a discernment process and committed to and entered into one of a number of educational paths to ordained ministry.

Within this model, the current category of designated lay ministry is incorporated within the ordained ministry of the church. The Committees understand this to be consistent with the overall direction of designated lay ministry as a life time call to the ministry of the whole church. It does not understand this to

be a “lay” ministry, but rather one indistinguishable from ordained ministry. The critical issue, the Committees believe, are rather the educational requirements for this path of ministry, to be addressed in the next section.

The structure of ministry in the church, as expressed in this proposal would therefore be as follows:

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| Staff Associate                                    | Ordained Ministry (Candidate)  | Ordained Ministry   |
| Congregational Accountable                         | Presbytery Accountable   | Presbytery Accountable                                    |
|  | Conference Recognition   | Conference Ordination                                     |
| Congregational membership                          | Presbytery membership (while under appointment)  | Presbytery membership                                     |
|  | Sacramental authority (while under appointment) approved by Conference                             | Sacramental authority                                     |
| Always in team with ordained minister or candidate | Team or solo leadership in congregation or ministry unit with supervision by an ordained minister. | Team or solo leadership in congregation or ministry unit. |

The Joint Working Group has developed this proposal independently of the Comprehensive Review Task Group but has been in conversation with them throughout the process. While it has not incorporated the proposal for a College of Ministers into this proposal, it does believe that the concept of one order of ministry would be workable either in that structure or the current one.

### **Multiple Streams of Educational Preparation**

An important concern in the development of this proposal for one order of ministry is the question, “What educational requirements are necessary for paid accountable ministry leadership?”

The Committees believe that there should be an equivalent educational expectation for all members of the order of ministry of The United Church of Canada. What “equivalency” looks like is a critical factor of this proposal. Educational requirements will need to be expanded to prepare for a greater range of ministries; and there will need to be a variety of educational programs that address different learning styles.

The Committees believe that there are options already existing within the church that represent the approximate level of equivalency that is desired. In particular the committee notes the basic equivalency that has already been established between the various Master of Divinity (M.Div.) programs, the [Centre for Christian Studies \(CCS\) program](#) and the [Sandy Saulteaux program for Aboriginal Ministry](#). The CCS and the Sandy Saulteaux models provide for four to five year non-residential programs based on an integration of ministry and learning circles and both grant a diploma on graduation. M.Div. programs are also available throughout the church in a variety of formats from distance learning programs to the more traditional three year residential models. Part of the requirement for ordination for M.Div. students includes a full time internship of eight months or equivalent. (St. Andrews’s has developed a model with a 20 month ministry internship.) The Atlantic School of Theology offers a five year distance learning program for those engaged in ongoing ministry. Thus M.Div. programs also correspond to a four to five year preparation time.

The Centre for Christian Studies and the Sandy Saulteaux programs are usually undertaken while in part-time employment. Many M.Div. students also serve in paid part-time ministry appointments during their studies in addition to their paid supervised ministry placement (either the eight month or two year options.) The end result is that these two streams and the M.Div. stream require a similar amount of time in

preparation and are approximately equivalent in personal financial cost. The somewhat greater cost of the residential M.Div. program (primarily from forgone earning from full time studies) is offset by the gaining of an academic degree.

The Committees affirm that there is a distinctive reality for aboriginal ministries that requires a program specifically addressed to the context of First Nations communities. For this reason it believes that the Sandy Saulteaux program should continue, as it addresses specifically preparation for the order of ministry for First Nations peoples. The Committees also believe that the Centre for Christian Studies program should continue as an educational path specifically focused on those who are committed to the diakonia.

The church therefore recognizes both degree and diploma paths for ministry formation. Both the degree and diploma schools carry “testamur” authority from the church, to certify that their candidates are prepared for ordination or commissioning.

The Committees propose that a fourth diploma educational path be developed following the model of the Designated Lay Ministry formation program.

### **Diploma in Theology and Pastoral Care**

The Designated Lay Ministry Program currently requires three years of non-residential theological education, in residential learning circles (two two-week learning circles a year with assigned work in between circles), and in Supervised Ministry Education (supervision) while in appointments of at least 50% time. In addition, students are required to take three additional university level courses. The Committees believe that the Designated Lay Ministry Program can fulfill the level of equivalency expected by extending the program to five years and modeling it on the Sandy Saulteaux or Centre for Christian Studies program, or the lay and summer distance programs of other schools.

The current Designated Lay Ministry program, under this proposal, would therefore need to be renamed, possibly lodged within an existing theological institution and expanded into a five year model. The Committees propose the terminology of a “Diploma in Theology and Pastoral Ministry” and for the sake of clarity will use that term in the remainder of this paper.

The Committees acknowledge that the proposal for one order of ministry will likely lead towards a greater convergence of theological schools and training for ministry. While continuing to uphold the M.Div. as the traditional standard for congregational ministry leadership, it is also possible, given the transitions that seem inevitable in the social context, that initiatives such as a Diploma in Theology and Pastoral Ministry might, in the future, become the primary entry point for ministry leadership. Therefore, the Committees have explored several questions:

First, what should be the prerequisite for entrance into a Diploma in Theology and Pastoral Ministry stream? Or in other words, what will be the minimum prerequisite for beginning studies towards ministry leadership in the United Church?

Currently there are four prerequisite options for entry into the Designated Lay Ministry program. (One of: Successful completion of a Licensed Lay Worship Leader (LLWL) program; Successful completion of the Leadership Development Module at the Centre for Christian Studies; Successful completion of a lay certificate in ministry (at a United Church theological college); Successful completion of a Prior Learning Assessment that demonstrates a basic level of competence in critical theological reflection.)



The Committees propose that one year of university studies within an established undergraduate program should be an expectation for anyone entering into ministry leadership in the United Church. The Committees believe that a commitment to life-long learning is required for effective ministry. They believe that completion of (at least) a first year level of university study would be a minimum indication of capacity and discipline necessary for such a commitment. A first year university program would also provide a basic introduction to humanities as a prerequisite for the Diploma in Theology and Pastoral Ministry study. The Committees expect that the Aboriginal community would continue to establish its own prerequisite requirements in order to best suit the needs of their communities.

Second, the Committees note that the current DLM program requires completion of three academic courses offered by other United Church theological institutions. The Committees propose that in the new Diploma program, this should be expanded to eight courses (such as that required by the CCS program) to ensure that there is deeper connection with candidates of all educational streams into the experience of theological studies and its interrelationship with critical thinking around mission and ministry. It also notes that a wide range of courses are now available through on-line options.

Finally, not all candidates for ministry in the various programs of study complete their course within the minimum time frames of the respective programs. This parallels the reality of many undergraduate and certainly graduate degree programs in general university studies. Therefore it is to be expected that candidates for ministry in any of the educational streams will vary in the time taken to complete the program. However, there is also a benefit to the church and to the individual to set a maximum time for completion of the program. The Committees propose that eight years is a realistic time frame to complete the educational requirements for ordained ministry.

### **Competency Based Assessment**

Consideration of competency based educational models that are currently underway throughout North America and in the United Church can also provide further opportunities to explore the meaning of equivalency in educational expectations. This report is addressed primarily to the theology and function of the order of ministry and is not directly linked to these proposals. However the use of competencies does offer a mechanism to continue to ensure that “the spiritual, theological, interpersonal, and educational competencies are the same for comparable ministries” and that life experience is taken into account in assessing overall fitness for ministry leadership.

### **Candidates for the Order of Ministry**

The Committees note that it has become a common practice for many students in all streams of ministry to be appointed into ministry positions either as part of their educational or candidature processes or as a means of funding their education. They therefore propose that a common terminology be established for all candidates who are appointed into paid accountable leadership that affirms their status and acknowledges their ongoing journey towards ordained ministry. It is proposed that the simple language of “candidate” accompany the term ordained. In other words, all individuals in any of the educational streams who have been appointed to a recognized ministry of the church would be able to identify themselves in this way. Ordained Candidates appointed to a recognized ministry would, in this model, have their membership held in a Presbytery.

### **Can this model meet the needs of the church for Ministry Personnel?**

In this model, a person who feels called to broader, longer-term ministry leadership to the church would be required to apply to the Order of Ministry before appointment. There would be a discernment, interview and appointment process that would lead to the status of Ordained Ministry (Candidate) and a requirement of entering one of the educational streams. The assumption that underlies this approach is that everyone in solo

ministry leadership in a community of faith would be on a journey towards, or have achieved an equivalency in educational preparation and be committed to formal life-long learning. For an individual called later in life to offer a number of years of service in ministry, the educational stream might never be finished, but it would represent a commitment to life-long learning and continuing preparation for more effective ministry leadership. For someone in early or mid-life, the expectation is that the educational work would be completed within eight years. In both cases the educational work would be undertaken while in either full-time or part-time ministry depending on the learning style and life circumstances of the individual.

If a person has gifts for some aspects of ministry but is not able to or chooses not to enter into one of the educational streams for ordained ministry, then the Working Group would encourage that his or her gifts for ministry be used either in a staff associate role, or possibly in a regional team model. This model is outlined [here](#) and offers an important option for ensuring that the varied gifts of ministry are available and effectively used for the ministry of the church.

The Committees recognize that the current structures of the church might change dramatically in the future. The committees believe however that this proposal can be adapted to whatever structure the church ultimately adopts. What this proposal offers, the Committees propose, is theological integrity, ecumenical consistency and simplicity in structure and understanding. They also believe that this proposal honours and does not diminish, the various gifts currently shared by ministry personnel within the United Church today.

## **MNWO 14 PROPOSALS RECOMMENDED BY GCE FOR ADOPTION – ONE ORDER OF MINISTRY**

**Originating Body:** Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) postpone definitely the proposals arising from “A Proposal for One Order of Ministry” until the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council in 2018 allowing time for ministers, candidates, inquirers, ministry associations, ministries, communities of faith, regional courts, councils or bodies to consider theological and ministry implications.**

### **Background:**

The proposal for One Order of Ministry proposes to expand the ordained ministry of the church to include Diaconal Ministers and Designated Lay Ministers. It further proposes multiple educational paths to ordained ministry based on an equivalency in both educational and spiritual formation (detailed in The Report of the Working Group on Leadership Formation for Ministry). The authors state their report (and recommendations contained therein) is “denominationally shaping in that it proposes a significant change in the nature of ministry for the church.” (GCE 1503 Workbook, 136).

The UCC public website hosts a concept paper for One Order of Ministry (May 2014); the final report is contained within the GCE 1503 Workbook (March 2015). There appear to be at least a few substantive changes in the final report. Choosing to proceed with these proposals at this time will not allow sufficient time for discussion and theological reflection on the impact of implementing the recommendations contained in the final report nor time to formulate alternatives.

Issues that may need to be addressed include:

- Ensuring the wider church has access to the final report for a sufficiently long period of time to engage in meaningful study
- Would the current vows as detailed in the Basis of Union (word & sacrament, education, service & pastoral care) continue to be used or would new common vows be developed for all members of the Order of Ministry? What are the implications?
- There appears to be no option for current Designated Lay Ministers to choose to be ordained to the diaconate.
- The re-introduction of a Staff Associate category does not adequately deal with issues of shortage of ministry personnel, especially in rural and remote areas.
- What will be the status of recognized or commissioned ministers who chose not to exercise the grand-parenting option of ordination?

- Denominationally, as in nature, it is recognized that diversity is critical to healthy communities. What other alternatives might exist to honour and strengthen our diversity in ministry rather than opt for assimilation?

Given the anticipated numbers of proposals coming forth in response to the recommendations contained in *Chasing the Spirit*, will other denominationally shaping recommendations receive the time and reflection necessary to make good and just decisions?

Deliberation on these proposals should be deferred to allow the courts sufficient time to focus on the more immediate and critical work and recommendations of the final report of the Comprehensive Review Task Force, *Chasing the Spirit*.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

## **TOR 14 CONSENSUS DECISION-MAKING**

**Origin:** Michael Shewburg/Irene Ty

**Financial Implications if known:** Nil

**Staffing Implications if known:** Nil

**Source of Funding if known:** Nil

**MOTION by Michael Shewburg/Irene Ty that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council adopt that:**

- 1. the principle of consensus decision-making for the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council in 2018, and all subsequent General Councils, based on the consensus decision-making model of the World Council of Churches, and contextualized for The United Church of Canada, with timing for implementation as determined by the Executive of the General Council.**
- 2. consensus will replace the current Rules of Debate and Order (prescribed in the Appendix of 2013 *The Manual*, on pages 211 – 215) for the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council in 2018—and all subsequent General Councils. Consensus will also replace the current Rules of Debate and Order at future meetings of the Executive of General Council, all of the Permanent Committees, national committees, national task groups, Conferences and presbyteries/Districts (or the successors of these courts).**
- 3. consensus decision-making is encouraged for use in pastoral charges, and that the General Secretary, General Council will develop appropriate training resources for pastoral charges.**
- 4. the model of consensus developed and approved for use in The United Church of Canada will:**
  - a. clearly define the meaning of “consensus”**
  - b. include all of the detailed steps needed in this decision-making process**
  - c. offer provisions on how to determine what happens when consensus cannot be reached**
  - d. establish the manner of referring any matter on which consensus cannot be reached to a vote, and**
  - e. meet the necessary corporate law requirements for the United Church as a legal corporation, such as noting what decisions must be made by a 2/3 majority of General Council Commissioners (as “members” of the corporation) and what decisions may not be made by consensus.**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council direct that:**

**That the Executive of General Council develops and approves the actual consensus decision-making model as adapted from World Council of Churches and contextualized for the United Church; then, implements, appropriate methods for training of Chairs, Moderators, Commissioners,**

**and Elected Members serving on committees and task groups on this model of consensus decision-making, including writing relevant supporting documents.**

**BACKGROUND**

Soon after The United Church of Canada declared its intention to become an intercultural church, a national Task Group on Intercultural Ministries was created. The task group was mandated to offer broad recommendations on what would enable the United Church to live into its intercultural vision, and to share ideas that would positively transform the church. The task group carefully considered programs, processes, and policies in all aspects of the church's life—including, but not limited to, education, leadership, hiring practices, worship and congregational life, and governance.

The task group—which was made up of people of diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds—learned that decision-making in the church was difficult for people to access and understand. This was an issue not only for people for whom English was a second language; it was also a challenge culturally. The necessity of arguing to prove one's point, of moving to a microphone to clearly articulate a thought in English within a given time limit, and the very particular rules of order meant that not everyone would be able to participate fully.

In addition, the Task Group on Intercultural Ministries noted particular power dynamics that took place at meetings. The group noted that the voices of people who were able to engage in debate were heard more clearly and more often; people for whom debate was not natural or comfortable struggled to make their points at a microphone. Some people dominated the meetings by speaking frequently; other voices felt silenced. The task group also noted that people who knew the Rules of Debate and Order very well were able to coherently communicate their perspectives, while others who did not know the processes as well felt uncomfortable and worried about speaking at the wrong times. These particular power dynamics cut across cultural lines.

Further, in 2011, the United Church undertook a national Identity Survey. In the analysis of the survey results, it was noted that “there is work to do if a complete sense of belonging requires full involvement in guiding the direction of the church—not everyone feels comfortable or is active in decision-making.”

As a result of its discernment and research, the Task Group on Intercultural Ministries wrote:

There are significant numbers of people from minoritized communities who are concerned about other people dominating the meeting, not being familiar with how the meeting works, or not feeling comfortable in the language of the meeting.

In turn, this might mean that when making decisions that affect the life of the church, cultural representation—and discerning who is present and who is not—means that the national body hears the voices of some much more loudly than others.

Members of the United Church have observed that people who are not familiar with parliamentary procedure would rarely make amendments or amendment to amendments, and are thus disadvantaged in the current system.

After much consideration, the task group wrote a work plan and suggested that consensus decision-making could be an alternative way of making decisions in governance meetings; it would enable minority groups to participate differently and more fully. This report comes out of that context.

### **WHY USE CONSENSUS**

Consensus means agreement, or an opinion that is shared by most of the group. Global Learning Partners<sup>1</sup> says that when done correctly, consensus decision-making can be positive because

- it involves every person who is affected by the decision in the decision-making process.
- it fosters a creative interplay of ideas: “two heads are better than one.”
- it relies on a cooperative dynamic rather than on a competitive one: the goal is to reach a decision, not to “win.” The power to reveal your part of the truth is the maximum force allowed (non-violence).
- it balances the responsibility of individuals to express their concerns with the responsibility of the group to respect the contributions of members.

Several other denominations and communions have used consensus decision-making, and have found that it has increased participation. The Uniting Church in Australia, for example, noted that consensus decision-making fosters full participation of all members, enables an openness to the unexpected, and takes heed of wisdom from all. The World Council of Churches found it to be a simple, transparent, process that enhanced participation and dialogue with a diversity of voices. For the World Council of Churches, it also assisted people to navigate with courtesy and respect through difficult discussions and contending perspectives, provided orderly deliberations and timely decisions, lifted up an exploration of creative alternatives, limited the power of a few to obstruct decisions, and overall helped to engage in common witness and service throughout the process.

According to Global Learning Partners, consensus recognizes that decisions are not an end in themselves: they begin with an idea and end with the implementation of the decision. Further, even though consensus decision-making processes may take more time, Global Learning Partners notes that quick decisions that do not have the support of the group will take a long time to be implemented, if they ever are, and that unresolved concerns can affect future decisions.

### **THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE**

In A New Creed, we affirm that God “works in us and others by the Spirit.” It was the Spirit who moved among diverse peoples at Pentecost (Acts 2) and brought to them new understandings when they gathered. In A Song of Faith, “We sing of the Spirit, who speaks our prayers of deepest longing and enfolds our concerns and confessions, transforming us and the world.” A Song of Faith also declares that “the church has not always lived up to its vision. It requires the Spirit to reorient it, helping it to live an emerging faith while honouring tradition, challenging it to live by grace rather than entitlement.”

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<sup>1</sup> Global Learning Partners is a non-profit organization that focuses on learning through dialogue; its website is [www.globallearningpartners.com](http://www.globallearningpartners.com).

The United Church's Call to Purpose, which was affirmed by the 39th General Council in 2006, said that "Spirit has moved in our time, and with a new restlessness we have heard a call to step forward." It went on to say that "we long for deeper connections with one another" and that "in our conversations and decision making we will be mindful of our commitment to interculturalism."

The World Council of Churches uses consensus in its decision-making, and notes in its theological rationale that a fully functioning body integrates the gifts of all its members: parts of the body need each other (1 Corinthians 12:12–27). When consensus is declared, all who have participated can confidently affirm: "It...seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (Acts 15:28). The Uniting Church in Australia notes that when its members gather as the body of Christ, they need the diverse gifts of all. They seek to discern God's will, confident that the voice of the Holy Spirit will guide them through careful preparation, the insights of others, and worship and prayer.

Consensus relies on the movement of the Spirit to bring people to a common mind and understanding among those who have come together for decision-making.

### **PROPOSED MODEL**

Several different models have carefully considered of the models of consensus that are currently used in the Uniting Church in Australia, the United Reformed Church in the UK, and the World Council of Churches. The proposed model for The United Church of Canada would be similar to the model that the World Council of Churches uses in its meetings.

In the World Council of Churches, there are three types of sessions: general, hearing, and decision sessions:

- **General sessions:** These are formal, ceremonial occasions at which no discussion or decision occurs. Examples of general sessions include worship, acknowledgement of the land, introduction of guests, group processes such as open space, or Bible studies.
- **Hearing sessions:** Everyone with the right to speak may participate in these sessions. A wide range of perspectives is encouraged. Understanding of the issue is developed, and fellowship of member churches is deepened, but no decisions are made. Examples of hearing sessions include a first reading of a report, and gathering initial feedback on that report.
- **Decision sessions:** Only delegates may contribute to decision sessions. A proposal can be progressively developed and then decided upon. Speakers should build on earlier contributions, and there is no restriction on speaking again. Indicator cards assist progress to consensus.

It is desirable to move from one session to another with clear divisions between each session. It may also be helpful to have a hearing session on a particular topic one day, so that people can better understand the issue and various perspectives on it, then to seek consensus at another point on the agenda.



In hearing and decision sessions, as discussion and reflection progresses, indicator cards may be used, allowing the Moderator or Chair to gauge the level of support. The Moderator or Chair can ask for delegates to hold a card discreetly at chest level. Orange cards indicate warmth toward an idea/acceptance; blue cards indicate coolness/disapproval. Holding both coloured cards crossed across one's chest indicates that prolonging debate does not seem helpful (for example, if the speaker is repetitious or irrelevant, or the points have been well made by others).

There are no formal amendments in a consensus process; variations to the wording may be suggested, and incremental changes can occur throughout the meeting as agreed. Small conversation groups can be a way to enable fuller participation. Seeking diverse opinions to come to a common mind is encouraged; endless wordsmithing about details is discouraged. A consensus is declared when all are in agreement about an outcome (unanimity); or most are in agreement, and the few who are not have been fairly heard and agree to consensus being recorded as the mind of the meeting (they can live with the outcome).

The World Council of Churches has established provisions for abstentions and for voting (when at least 85 percent of the participants agree to move to a formal voting procedure). The United Church will need to further consider processes for abstentions and voting. Abstentions, for example, require noting an individual's actions and concerns. The United Church will need to reflect on whether noting an individual's concerns is still consistent with the broader community coming to common mind as inspired by the Spirit in a consensus model. With this in mind, the World Council of Churches documents should be further consulted for specific clarifications on a fully developed model within the United Church.

If consensus is elusive, the matter can be referred to a working group to report back later, referred to another body, and then considered at a future meeting. Alternatively, the court could agree to affirm various opinions held within the church, or agree that the matter will no longer be considered.

Despite a desire to move to consensus for decision-making, some decisions at General Council, or its Executive, may continue to require a vote for legal purposes. These may include

- election of the Moderator
- appointing the General Secretary of General Council

The items that require a vote for legal purposes will need to be noted in documents that describe the model of consensus for The United Church of Canada.

### **CURRENT UNITED CHURCH PROCESS**

The United Church of Canada already has some familiarity with aspects of consensus decision-making in some courts. At recent General Council meetings, for example, some of the business has been done using a "proposal" method, and the Moderators have tested the mood of the court with orange and blue indicator cards.

During the "proposal" stage of these meetings, participants were able to shape a particular proposal without making amendments or using formal motions. The goal at this stage of the process has been to achieve consensus before moving to a motion, or, alternatively, where there has been not consensus, to receive assurance that the matter before the court has been fully

considered. The proposal system, when used effectively, can provide greater flexibility for discussion and discernment; however, when the process is unclear, the system also has a greater capacity for confusion.

At these meetings, proposal processes were used in order to provide a context for discernment and discussion without the cumbersome use of amendments. Proposals provided an opportunity for individuals to express their views about the proposed course of action by using the indicator cards, without needing to speak at the microphone. The proposal system makes it easier to propose changes, and to enable broader voices to be heard.

The United Church also has some familiarity with discernment as led by the Spirit at meetings. At recent General Councils, there has been time for discernment and prayerful reflection to sense the mood of the court. These times of discernment enabled deep conversations and connections with one another, which, in turn, had influence over the gathering. In 2006, for example, the process of discernment resulted in A Call to Purpose, which the 39th General Council directed to its Executive as the Executive gives leadership to the church.

Consensus decision-making further builds upon the principles of the proposal process, which are already familiar to some in the United Church, and deepens these ideas to create a process where more people can participate more fully.

There are, however, some key differences between the proposal process and consensus decision-making. Firstly, at recent meetings of General Council, once the proposals are agreed upon, the court shifts from a “proposal” stage into a “motion” stage. At this point, the Rules of Debate and Order that are prescribed in *The Manual* apply. Secondly, in a voting procedure (which is the final stage in the United Church’s current process), there are “winners” and “losers”; while a range of viewpoints may be heard during the proposal process, voting does not discern the common mind of the court in the same way that consensus does. In a vote, proposals can be passed by a slight majority of people who approve, while there may still be division in the court.

Further, even though the proposal process has been used at recent General Council meetings, neither the proposal process nor consensus decision-making are in widespread use in other courts of the church. This report seeks to enable courts of the church (presbyteries/districts, Conferences, and/or their successors) to also use consensus decision-making in their processes.

This proposed change may raise questions and concerns for some people. It may be helpful, therefore, to remember some of the words of A Song of Faith: “the Spirit challenges us to celebrate the holy not only in what is familiar, but also in that which seems foreign.”

May the Spirit continue to provide wisdom in our discernment and decision-making.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**MOTION by Michael Shewburg/Irene Ty  
MOTION**

**CARRIED.**

## **GS 5 APPEAL: CALCULATION OF DEADLINE TO INITIATE APPEAL**

**Origin:** General Secretary, General Council

**Financial Implications:** n/a

**Source of Funding:** n/a

**Staffing Implications:** n/a

**It is proposed that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 adopt the following policy change for appeals of decisions of courts of the church, to be reflected in the By-laws:**

- (1) The time period for appealing a decision starts when the person or court directly affected by it receives notice of the decision as set out in the By-laws, or 15 days after the court distributes the draft minutes of the meeting at which the decision was made, whichever is earlier.**
- (2) If, however, the decision as minuted is subsequently changed when the minutes are approved, the time period starts to run when the person or court receives notice of the changed decision as set out in the By-laws, or 15 days after the court distributes the changed minutes, whichever is earlier.**

### **Background:**

A decision made by a court of the church may be appealed within a fixed time period by a person or court directly affected by the decision (the “**appellant**”)\*. Under the By-laws, this time period starts to run on the *earliest* of three dates:

- the date the appellant gets notice of the decision directly from the court
- 15 days after the court distributes its draft minutes of the meeting at which the decision was made
- 15 days after the court distributes the approved minutes if changes were made to the decision in the minutes when they were approved.

This policy is potentially unfair to appellants and should be changed. The following example illustrates the problem.

A court makes a decision on April 15 and the secretary hand-delivers it to the appellant on April 16. The appeal period starts to run from April 16 as it is the earliest of the three dates listed above. The appellant does not start an appeal because they are satisfied with the decision. At the court’s next meeting on May 20, the minutes of the April 15 meeting are approved with some corrections to the part that contain the decision. The appellant learns of the corrections when the court distributes the approved minutes to all members. The corrections change the decision and the appellant now want to appeal. However, the time period has already expired.

The policy should be revised so that it strikes a fair balance between the rights of those affected by decisions to appeal them, and the court’s need to know within a reasonable time period whether its decision will be appealed.

\* There are other rules that apply to all appeals but they are not relevant to this proposal.

## **GS 6 MINUTES OF COURT MEETINGS**

**Origin: General Secretary, General Council**

**Financial Implications: n/a**

**Source of Funding: n/a**

**Staffing Implications: n/a**

**It is proposed that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 adopt the policy that:**

- (a) all courts of the church are responsible for posting the draft minutes of meetings of the court, its executive, sub-executive and commissions on their websites if they have one;**
- (b) if a court does not have a website, it must post the draft minutes by any other means that makes them available to its members promptly;**
- (c) minutes of governing bodies of congregations and other local ministry units must be posted in some way that makes them available to members of the local ministry unit;**
- (d) minutes must clearly indicate any decisions that have been made; and**
- (e) the court must post the minutes again after they have been approved.**

**And further, that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 direct that the By-laws be changed to reflect this policy.**

### **Background:**

Within United Church Polity, there is an implicit understanding that members of a court are entitled to receive minutes of the court's meetings.

The By-laws, however, only require that General Council, Conferences and presbyteries post draft minutes on their websites if they have one. There is no explicit requirement for a court to make minutes available to members in another way if it does not have a website. And there is no explicit requirement for congregations and their governing bodies to make the minutes of their meetings available to their members in any way at all.

In the interests of clarity and transparency, there should be an explicit requirement for all courts and congregations to post their minutes in a way that makes them available to their members. The word "post" is broad enough to include posting on a website and sending the minutes by mail or email, and is preferable to the term "distribute".

In addition, governing bodies of congregations should be required to make their minutes available to all members of the congregation, not just members of the governing body. This is important for accountability and for appeal rights. The governing body may make a decision that

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directly affects members of the congregation who are not on the governing body. These members should be entitled to know of the governing body's decision so they can assess whether they wish to appeal it.

**GS7 NOTICE OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS RE:  
AMALGAMATIONS AND DISBANDING**

**Origin:** General Secretary, General Council

**Financial Implications:** n/a

**Source of Funding:** n/a

**Staffing Implications:** n/a

**It is proposed that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015:**

- (i) adopt the policy that there be a notice period specifically for congregational meetings called for the purpose of deciding whether to amalgamate or disband the congregation;**
- (ii) set this notice period to be “two Sundays plus one day”; and**
- (iii) direct that the By-laws be changed to reflect this new policy.**

**Background:**

A decision whether to amalgamate or disband is a fundamental decision in the life of a congregation. When the congregation meets to make this kind of decision, there should be ample advance notice of the meeting to members of the congregation.

Currently, only one Sunday’s advance notice is required. If an announcement is made about the congregational meeting at a worship service, the meeting may take place after the service that very day.

For other kinds of decisions, a longer notice period is required for congregational meetings. For example, when the decision involves the pastoral relationship, the advance notice required for the meeting is at least two Sundays plus one day. The announcement must be made on two separate Sundays, and the earliest date that the meeting may take place is on the Monday after the second Sunday.

The same “two Sundays plus one day” advance notice is also required for meetings to elect members of the congregation’s governing body [Session/Stewards/Official Board, Board, Council].

This longer notice period should also apply to a meeting where the congregation is deciding whether to amalgamate or disband.

**GS 8 MEMBERS OF THE ORDER OF MINISTRY ELECTED /  
APPOINTED TO PUBLIC OFFICE**

**Origin:** General Secretary, General Council

**Financial Implications:** n/a

**Source of Funding:** n/a

**Staffing Implications:** n/a

**It is proposed that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 adopt the policy that applies to members of the order of ministry who are serving in a pastoral charge when they are elected or appointed to any public office:**

- (a) they are responsible for calling a meeting of the pastoral charge's governing body promptly, for the purpose of initiating any necessary changes to the call or appointment; and**
- (b) if the call or appointment is ended, they are responsible for applying to be retained on the role of the presbytery.**

**And further that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council direct that the By-laws be changed to reflect this new policy.**

**Background:**

The By-laws currently cover the situation where a member of the order of ministry is elected as a member of a provincial legislature or federal parliament. The ordered minister has the responsibilities set out in the above paragraphs (a) and (b), as contained in Section C.2.4 of the By-laws.

Other situations may arise that are similar. An ordered minister may be elected to municipal or band office, rather than as member of a provincial legislature or federal parliament. Also, an ordered minister may serve in public office by way of an appointment, rather than election.

In those kinds of situations, the same policy should apply as for an ordered minister elected as a member of a provincial legislature or federal parliament.

## **GS 11 FRENCH TRANSLATION OF *THE MANUAL***

**Origin: General Secretary, General Council and the Manual Committee**

**Financial Implications if known: n/a**

**Staffing Implications if known: n/a**

**Source of Funding if known: n/a**

**The General Secretary proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 recognize the version of The Manual 2013 posted at the link below as the official French translation of The Manual:**

**[http://www.united-church.ca/fr/files/handbooks/manual\\_2013.pdf](http://www.united-church.ca/fr/files/handbooks/manual_2013.pdf)**

### **Background:**

The 2013 edition of The Manual was published in English as a complete re-write of the by-laws contained in the previous edition of The Manual. The 2013 Manual has now been translated into French. Montreal Presbytery and the Consistoire Laurientien have each given their approval to the translated version.



## **GCE 2 – REF MEPS 9 - POLICE RECORDS CHECK**

**Origin:** Executive of the General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

**Approve that the first paragraph of the Manual section J.2 Police Records Checks be amended as follows:**

~~**The United Church has processes to determine suitability for ministry. One process requires individuals who are, or are seeking to be, in ministry positions to obtain a police records check on an ongoing basis.**~~

**The United Church is committed to providing a safe environment for worship, work, and study in all local ministries, institutions, agencies, organizations, and other bodies that operate under its name. As leaders within the church, ministry personnel hold positions of trust and authority and are often in contact with vulnerable persons. The United Church recognizes that all people are vulnerable to varying degrees at different stages in their lives. This may include people typically recognized as vulnerable, such as children, youth, hospital patients and some elderly individuals. However, it can also include otherwise healthy adults who become vulnerable because of personal circumstances.**

### **History**

- **1997** - The 36<sup>th</sup> General Council put forth a mandate to the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education and the Human Resources Committee to develop a policy, protocol and educational resources for the screening of individuals in positions of trust and authority.
- **1998** - A Task Group with representation from Human Resources, the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education and the Division of Mission in Canada worked jointly on this project.
- **2000** - August the 37<sup>th</sup> General Council adopted the policy of screening and Police Records Check. National standards were developed, wide consultation performed and the General Council Executive approved implementation of the Police Record Checks policy.
- **2000** - Memorandum of Understanding entered into between The United Church of Canada and the Toronto Police Service (Level 2- Vulnerable Sector Check).
- **2004** - Letter to Conferences sent to remind Conferences, Presbyteries and Congregations about the importance of doing Police Record Checks.
- **2004** - Denominational letter developed and sent to Conferences regarding Police Records Check.
- **2004** - Policy was implemented.

- **2012** - The General Council Sub Executive approved changes to the police records check procedures as a response to changes in the police record check system.

### **Background**

- The 41<sup>st</sup> General Council 2012 directed that a policy be developed on the United Church's duty of care and the importance of police records check.
- The draft policy be submitted to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 for consideration.
- The procedural requirements for police records check be removed from the by-laws (Manual) and be made available in a resource document from the General Council Office. This process has been done.

All procedural requirements have been removed from the Manual 2013.

If adopted by the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council, section J.2 Police Records Checks would read:

The United Church is committed to providing a safe environment for worship, work, and study in all local ministries, institutions, agencies, organizations, and other bodies that operate under its name. As leaders within the church, ministry personnel hold positions of trust and authority and are often in contact with vulnerable persons. The United Church recognizes that all people are vulnerable to varying degrees at different stages in their lives. This may include people typically recognized as vulnerable, such as children, youth, hospital patients and some elderly individuals. However, it can also include otherwise healthy adults who become vulnerable because of personal circumstances.

Ministry personnel, inquirers, and candidates are responsible for getting a police records check and giving it to a court or a committee at various times in their life in ministry. Courts and committees are responsible for ensuring that this responsibility is properly fulfilled.

There are additional policies and procedures that apply to police records checks. They include details about the types of police records checks required, the times they are required, and the courts and committees that must receive them.

### **Rationale**

Providing a policy statement on police records check that articulates our commitment as United Church to provide a safe environment is very helpful.

## **GCE 3 – REF MEPS 14 CONGREGATIONAL DESIGNATED MINISTRY POLICY**

**Origin: Executive of the General Council**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

**Adopt the following policy, addressing the role and purpose of congregational designated ministers, for inclusion in *The Manual*, recognizing the role of the Manual Committee in editing and re-writing content to suit the style and clean language of *The Manual*:**

**Policy:**

**The United Church of Canada recognizes that congregational designated ministers make a valuable contribution to the church, serving in programmatic and administrative roles in support of the mission and ministry of local ministry units. Congregational designated ministry is appointment-based ministry, which may be renewed.**

**A congregational designated minister is a baptized lay person employed by a local ministry unit, accountable to the governing body of the local ministry, except in matters of oversight and discipline where they are accountable to the presbytery.**

**The role of a congregational designated minister is to**

- **fulfill a specified ministry position;**
- **work with the ministry personnel who is called or appointed to the pastoral charge, as directed by the governing body; and**
- **comply with the polity of the United Church.**

### **History**

A proposal went to the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council in 2012 requesting a draft policy be developed as to the role and purpose of congregational designated ministers. The draft policy is to be submitted to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council for consideration.

### **Background**

The by-laws contain criteria for the employment of congregational designated ministers but do not contain any explanation of the purpose and role of congregational designated ministers in the United Church.

**Rationale**

There should be a policy statement in the by-laws setting out the purpose and role of congregational designated ministers. All other policies and procedures relating to congregational designated ministers, such as employment criteria, would be based on this policy.

**Additional Resources**

[\*The Manual\*](#), Pastoral Relations I.1.8; J.7; J.9.8; J.9.9

[Congregational Designated Minister](#) resource

## **GCE 4 – REF MEPS 13 LICENSED LAY WORSHIP LEADER POLICY**

**Origin: Executive of the General Council**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

**Adopt the following policy, addressing the role and purpose of licensed lay worship leaders, for inclusion in *The Manual*, recognizing the role of the Manual Committee in editing and re-writing content to suit the style and clean language of *The Manual*:**

### **Policy**

**The United Church of Canada recognizes that licensed lay worship leaders make a valuable contribution to the church offering occasional worship leadership and preaching in local ministry units that have need of worship leadership on a temporary basis.**

**A licensed lay worship leader is a lay member of The United Church of Canada, in good standing, who has been recommended by the governing body of their pastoral charge, duly educated, and licensed by their presbytery to offer occasional worship leadership and preaching within the bounds of their presbytery.**

**The role of a licensed lay worship leader is to**

- **prepare and lead worship services;**
- **prepare and deliver sermons;**
- **work with local ministry members and staff, i.e. musicians, lay readers, church administrators; and**
- **be aware of and address congregational responses to lay leadership and service content.**

### **History**

A proposal went to the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council in 2012 requesting a draft policy be developed as to the role and purpose of licensed lay worship leaders. The draft policy is to be submitted to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council for consideration. The process for becoming a licensed lay worship leader was to be deleted from the by-laws and moved to a resource document available from the General Council Office.

Prior to the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council, much of the procedural policy pertaining to licensed lay worship leaders was removed from *The Manual* to the Licensed Lay Worship Leader resource as a part of the larger project to re-write and simplify *The Manual*.

### **Background**

The current by-laws contain policy about licensed lay worship leaders that addresses membership, jurisdiction (which court is responsible for decision-making), and term of licence,

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but do not contain any explanation as to the role and purpose of a licensed lay worship leader in the United Church.

**Rationale**

There should be a policy statement in the by-laws setting out the role and purpose of licensed lay worship leaders on which all other policies and procedures would be based.

**Additional Resources**

[The Manual](#), Local Ministry Unit B.7.4.5 (a); Pastoral Relations I.1.8.4  
[Licensed Lay Worship Leader](#) resource

## **GCE 5 – REF MEPS 19 SABBATICALS FOR PERSONS INVOLVED IN INTERIM MINISTRY (GC41 HAM 10)**

**Origin: Executive of the General Council**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- **take no action on the original proposal HAM 10; and**
- **require all presbytery accountable ministries that appoint an interim minister to intentional interim ministry to pay into the Interim Ministry Sabbatical Fund.**

### **Rationale**

GCE 11 Report of the Interim Ministry Steering Group, originally passed by the Executive of the General Council in November of 2008, and later by the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council in August of 2012, included the procedural policy for Interim Ministry sabbatical:

4. And that the Executive of the General Council affirm the Application of Sabbatical Beyond the Pastoral Charge as follows:

#### **Presbytery Recognized**

Under this heading we have listed Camp/Retreat Manager (FT); outreach: street missions; hospital chaplain; senior care homes; and presbytery ministry. We are considering these positions under two categories: employed by presbytery and employed by a body other than presbytery.

#### **Employed by Presbytery:**

Presbytery would be responsible for providing sabbatical leaves to employees who are ministry personnel under the same conditions as applicable to congregations – costs would be the responsibility of presbytery

#### **Employed by a body other than Presbytery:**

In the case of a presbytery recognized ministry that is not operated by presbytery and the ministry personnel are not employed by presbytery, the church would recommend and urge the employing body to make a sabbatical program similar to that offered by the United Church to ministry personnel at the congregational level.

#### **Retained on the Roll**

Included under this heading were Hospital and Prison Chaplains. We suggest the United Church has no obligation to provide a sabbatical program to ministry personnel in these positions. It would seem reasonable for the Church to recommend to the employing bodies that a sabbatical program, similar to that which is available to ministry personnel at the congregational level, be made available to such Chaplains.

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Fully implementing the procedural policy of GCE 11 would meet the requests of HAM 10, with the exception that ministries not accountable to the presbytery can be encouraged, but not required to provide ministry personnel with a sabbatical.

The working group recommends changes to the terms of reference of the Interim Ministry Sabbatical Fund (a program of the General Council Office Financial Assistance program) allowing presbytery-accountable ministries participating in intentional interim ministries to contribute to the Interim Ministry Sabbatical Fund.

### **Background**

The 41<sup>st</sup> General Council, 2012 heard a proposal from Hamilton Conference (HAM 10 Sabbaticals for Persons Involved in Interim Ministry) that proposed one change to the program of interim sabbatical funding, and two changes to the current sabbatical policy of the United Church:

1. reconsider the decision to limit Sabbatical Funding for Interim Ministers to only those serving in an Interim Ministry position defined as "appointed by Presbytery to work toward specific goals identified by the Presbytery and the Pastoral Charge".
2. expand the definition to include Interim Ministers who are employed by a Presbytery or a body other than a Presbytery in designated Interim positions that includes specific goals identified by the Presbytery and the employing body.
3. that the General Council directs the Executive of the General Council to develop policy to describe and authorize such situations as Interim Ministries that would be eligible to be included in the "time served" calculations for Sabbatical Funding.

The commission considering the proposal received a briefing note on the proposal that read:

*“Currently the Manual provides for regular sabbaticals for ministry personnel in pastoral charges. The GCE authorized, and this GC is being asked to confirm (through the formal approval of 2008-11-15-329), the provision of sabbaticals leaves to Interim ministers in pastoral charges funded by a levy of the equivalent of two week’s salary to a fund administered by the General Council Office. The draft Manual proposal before this Council changes reference to “pastoral charge” to “local ministry”. This opens the definition to include a broader range of ministry sites, including those of concern in this proposal. No further action is required to accomplish the objective of this proposal.”*

Based on the information that was provided to the commission in the briefing note, and in the following discussion, the commission moved:

**That the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council take no action and refer those concerned to The Manual “2013”.**

**Carried. (Motion: GC41 2012 – 085)**

In *The Manual*, 2013 previous references to “pastoral charge” were changed to “local ministry unit” in the governance section but not in the pastoral relations section, which is where the sabbatical policy is located. Therefore, the briefing notes to the Council were inaccurate, because the sabbatical policy continued to apply only to pastoral charges, and was not opened to a “broader range of ministry sites.” Since the mandate of the simplification of *The Manual* was to



clarify and simplify the language and structure of *The Manual*, not to change policy, it would have been beyond the scope of the simplification project to broaden the sabbatical policy beyond pastoral charges. Without a decision by the General Council to change the sabbatical policy, the policy, as it exists, was removed from *The Manual* and placed in the *Interim Ministry Resource* with no change; that is, applying only to pastoral charges and not to other presbytery accountable ministries.

Post General Council, the General Secretary directed this proposal and the motion to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services for further consideration. The Permanent Committee appointed a Working Group on Interim Ministry to make recommendations on the original proposal (HAM 10). The working group consulted GCE 11 Report of the Interim Ministry Steering Group (GC41 2012 – 084; Carried) which is the original procedural policy for interim ministry sabbatical passed by the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council, and *The Manual*, 2013, sections I.1.7 Interim Ministry, and I.2.3.5 Sabbatical Leave

## **GCE 6 – REF MEPS 21 PROPOSAL REGARDING THE PASTORAL RELATIONS SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY**

**Origin: Executive of the General Council**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

**Amend the sabbatical leave policy by removing the word “consecutive” and amending The Manual and supporting documents accordingly.**

### **Rationale**

Following the 2011 review of the Pastoral Relations Sabbatical Policy, three focus groups were held to address the policy in four distinct areas: Purpose, Procedures, Flexibility, and Financing. In addition, a few individuals who did not participate in any of the focus groups provided input directly to the Ministry and Employment Unit. The purpose of the Sabbatical Leave was considered to be appropriately defined in the Pastoral Relations: Engaging and Supporting resource document. Generally, the procedures set out in that document relating to Sabbatical Leave were also considered appropriate.

Based on the input received from the participants, two areas of concern with the present policy were raised by a number of participants: flexibility and financing. There is support for the idea of permitting some flexibility in unique situations for ministry personnel to take sabbatical leave in blocks of time, rather than over a period of consecutive months. There is also support for the idea of providing some financial assistance from the General Council Office to pastoral charges for which financing supply ministerial services during the incumbent ministry personnel’s sabbatical leave presents a financial hardship.

It is proposed that the revised wording of the Policy and Procedures Point #1 (found on page 43 of the Pastoral Relations Handbook <http://www.united-church.ca/files/handbooks/pastoral-relations.pdf>) be:

It is the policy of The United Church of Canada that every pastoral charge provide a paid sabbatical of at least three months to those in paid accountable ministry who have completed at least five years of service in one call or appointment. Normally, the three months will be taken consecutively.

It is also proposed that a new Funding for Sunday Supply during a Sabbatical document be created and require that applications for funding be sent to the Ministry and Employment Unit.

Given the feedback on the procedures concerning the Pastoral Relations Sabbatical Policy, it is proposed that a new communications strategy on the Sabbatical Policy be developed and communicated in the autumn of 2015 to ministry personnel in pastoral charges and to all pastoral charges.

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[Appendix A](#) to this report contains examples of the feedback received through the focus groups.

[Appendix B](#) to this report contains the 2011 Working Group Report on the Pastoral Relations Sabbatical Policy.

[Appendix C](#) to this report contains the 2008 document “Funding for Sunday Supply during a Sabbatical”, for reference.

NOTE: these Appendices are online documents

## **GCE 7 – REF MEPS 18 CONFERENCE INTERVIEWS FOR INTERIM MINISTERS (GC41 TOR 1)**

**Origin: Executive of the General Council**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

**Approve the following policy for interim ministers, including changes to the by-laws, where necessary:**

- a. an initial designation of an interim minister is required prior to the first appointment;**
- b. an effectiveness interview is required after the initial appointment to determine continued designation;**
- c. re-designation after an initial appointment is valid for five years from the date of re-designation;**
- d. an exit interview is required at the end of every subsequent appointment; and**
- e. a re-designation interview will be required every five years for all interim ministers.**

### **Background**

The 41<sup>st</sup> General Council 2012 heard a proposal from Toronto Conference (TOR 1 Conference Interviews for Interim Ministers) that proposed the removal of two pieces of interim ministry procedural policy:

1. Following the first period of interim ministry, the Committee shall interview the Interim Minister, evaluate the effectiveness of the Interim Minister, and make a recommendation to the Conference Executive, for or against the continued designation of the person as an Interim Minister, with or without conditions. The Conference shall make a decision and shall notify the person in writing of the decision. (*The Manual*, 2010 465 b. iv)
2. Following each subsequent period of Interim Ministry, the Committee shall interview the Interim Minister and evaluate the effectiveness of the Interim Minister. (*The Manual*, 2010 465 b. v)

The 41st General Council took no action on the proposal, and referred those concerned to *The Manual*, 2013. (GC41 2012 – 086).

*The Manual*, 2013 removed a majority of the procedural policy to adjunct resources, including most of the interim ministry evaluation procedures referenced in TOR 10. The policy that remains in *The Manual*, 2013 reads:

#### **I.7.6. Evaluation**

The Conference must evaluate the effectiveness of the interim minister after each period of interim ministry. The Interim Ministry Transition Committee participates in this evaluation.

**CONSENT - 18**

The purpose of the simplification of *The Manual* was to clarify and simplify the language and structure of *The Manual*, not to change policy. Without a decision by the General Council to change the evaluation procedures for interim ministers the policy, as it exists, would be removed from *The Manual* and included in the *Interim Ministry Resource* with no change.

Post General Council, the General Secretary directed this proposal and the motion to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services for further consideration. The Permanent Committee appointed a Working Group on Interim Ministry to make recommendations on the original proposal.

The working group consulted with the original Interim Ministry Steering Group Report, 2008; The Task Group on Interim Ministry Report on Consultation held November 2005; and the Conference Personnel Ministers at their in-person meeting in November of 2014.

### **Rationale**

In comparing the consultation notes from the Interim Ministry consultation and report, and the feedback from the Conference Personnel Ministers, the working group found that the majority opinion reached by the Conference Personnel Ministers was very similar to the process of designation originally outlined in the Interim Ministry Report on Consultation held November 2005. The working group decided that two consultations almost ten years apart resulting in a nearly identical process was an indication of functionality within our policy.

The working group felt that the retention of an effectiveness interview after an Interim Minister's initial appointment was important to ensure that theory could be translated in practice: that ministry personnel who were called to intentional interim ministry could function effectively in high-stress environments, manage conflict, empathetically lead church members through transformational change, and know how to set boundaries so that they are not personally depleted. Intentional interim ministry is a vital yet challenging call within the United Church and the Church is responsible for care of the ministers. Part of that care is ensuring that the right ministers are called to this ministry.

The working group did not feel that it was necessary to have an effectiveness interview after every subsequent appointment, and in fact felt that this policy presented a double-standard for interim ministers when all ministry personnel are not required to participate in effectiveness interviews at the point of a change in pastoral relations.

All ministry personnel do have exit interviews at the point of a change in pastoral relations for the purpose of learning from the pastoral relationships, and the working group is therefore recommending that Interim Ministers have exit interviews at the end of appointments to reflect on the appointment, receive feedback from the pastoral charge, and assist the presbytery in knowing how to continue to support the pastoral charge into the future.

## **GCE 8 – REF MEPS 23 EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND HEALTHY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS**

**Origin: Executive of the General Council**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- **Receive the report of the Executive of the General Council on the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships testing; and**
- **Approve that the testing continue to develop the principles until such time as new polity and policies are established by the General Council or its Executive.**

### **Background**

At the March 2015 meeting of the Executive of the General Council, the Chair of the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Services and resource staff presented an overview on the work done on the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project. Concluding their remarks, the chair of the Permanent Committee introduced an alternative motion, put forth by the General Secretary, recommending that Executive of the General Council receive the Proposal for Action on Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships for information, forward the report to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council, thank the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services for their work, and ensure that the recommendations contained in the report inform the development of new policies consistent with the directions determined by the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council, 2015.

The alternative motion, GS58, was passed by the General Council Executive and the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council is now being asked to extend the testing of Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationship projects until such a time as new polity or policies are established by the General Council or its Executive.

## **GCESE 1 AMENDING THE DISABILITY PROVISIONS OF *THE MANUAL***

**Originating Body: Sub-Executive of the General Council**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Sub-Executive of the General Council proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

**Accept the following proposal on Amending the Disability Provision of the Manual for approval:**

### **Amending the Disability Provision of the Manual**

**Amend section I.2.2 of The Manual by removing the existing wording and replacing it with the following policy:**

**The United Church is committed to providing disability care and benefits for ministry personnel and lay employees serving in paid accountable positions and who, due to illness or injury become unable to carry out the duties and responsibilities of their position. Disability insurance benefits are available to those who:**

- **are members of the group insurance plan;**
- **are not receiving a United Church pension; and**
- **have a disability that prevents them from working, as confirmed following the applicable United Church process.**

**The United Church will strive to treat fairly and compassionately ministry personnel and lay employees who have a disability that prevents them from working and will also strive to treat local ministry sites and employment sites, with an employee or ministry personnel who becomes disabled, in a manner that is equally fair and compassionate.**

**The United Church will provide disability benefit plans applicable to two distinct situations – short-term disability (for absences of up to six months) and long-term disability (for absences beyond an initial six month period). The disability programs reflect a focus on treatment and restoration, to the extent possible. The United Church is committed to the implementation of the disability policy in a consistent manner throughout the church.**

**FYI: There are additional policies and procedures contained in a disability resource that apply to disability benefit plans. That resource is available from the General Council Office.**

**Background:**

- **2006** - A proposal (BQ5) was presented to the 39<sup>th</sup> General Council entitled, “Use of the Manse by Ministry Personnel on Disability”, seeking a review of the policy related to the use of the manse and housing allowance issues for Ministry Personnel on disability
- **2006** - The 39<sup>th</sup> General Council referred the matter to the Executive of the General Council, which in turn referred the matter to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services [the Permanent Committee]
- **2007** - A proposal to consider establishing a working group to review the policy related to the use of the manse and housing allowance for ministry personnel on long-term medical leave was approved by the Permanent Committee at its April 12-13, 2007 meeting
- **2009** - The Manse Working Group reported to the Permanent Committee in September of 2009, identifying a number of issues of concern regarding the content and meaning of section 037 of *The Manual*
- The Manse Working Group concluded that a new policy statement should be created to address issues related to disability and that procedural issues concerning disability should be removed from *The Manual* and moved to a separate resource document
- The Manse Working Group concluded that this was beyond its mandate to address
- **2010** - Having received the report of the Manse Working Group, the Permanent Committee established a Task Group on Disability Policy and Procedures
- **2011** - Having concluded its review of the existing disability policies and procedures, the Task Group created a report, outlining its findings and recommendations
- **2011** - The Permanent Committee agreed in principle with the direction of the report and referred the report back to the Task Group for further development of a number of its recommendations
- **2012** - In light of the work around the Simplification of Processes and the proposed changes to the next edition of *The Manual*, the Task Group recommended to the Permanent Committee that three of the Report’s recommendations be brought forward to the Executive of the General Council (Report recommendations 1, 2, & 20).
- **2012** – The Permanent Committee proposed to the General Council Executive the implementation of three recommendations

That the Executive of the General Council ...

1. remove the current provisions of s. 037 of *The Manual* in their entirety from the next edition of *The Manual* and replace them with an overall policy statement on the provision of disability insurance benefits plans to ministry personnel and employees working within the various courts of the Church, its pastoral charges, community ministries, missions, and other ministry sites which are currently covered by the Church’s short-term and long-term disability plans;



2. direct the General Secretary, General Council, to:
    - a. create a new Disability Resource which describes in greater detail the policies concerning the provision of short-term and long-term disability benefits, including the provision of benefits to those who become totally and permanently disabled. This single Disability Resource will also include all relevant information on procedures for accessing benefits under each of these plans, including relevant time frames, forms, contact information, and the responsibilities of and obligations on ministry personnel, ministry sites, lay employees, and employment sites; and
    - b. ensure that policy documents of the United Church reflect the principle that a person may not be removed from his or her office or position because of a disability. The wording should refer to the ability of a person to perform the duties and responsibilities of the office or position rather than the presence of a disability.
- The motion to approve this proposal was carried by the Executive of the General Council. (MEPS 29, March 24-26, 2012)
  - This proposal was not presented to the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council due to an administrative error. Thus it is being presented at this time.
  - Provisions concerning Disability were included in The Manual 2013 in Section I.2.2. Hence this current proposal refers to Section I.2.2 and not to Section 037.
  - This proposal was approved by the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services on May 12, 2015 and referred to the Sub-Executive of the General Council.

**Rationale:**

The provision of a clear policy statement on disability that articulates our commitment as the United Church to the provision of care and benefits to those who become unable to perform their work due to a disability is helpful and informative and should constitute a bylaw of the church. Removing the details of the disability plans and the procedural requirements to access benefits under those plans from the bylaws (through inclusion in The Manual) and including them in a resource document is consistent with how other ministry and personnel policies are now being presented in The Manual.

## **TITLE: NOM 1 APPOINTMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL**

**Origin:** The Executive of the General Council, Nominations Committee

**Financial Implications if known: no change**

**Staffing Implications if known: no change**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Nominations Committee proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Appoint the following members to serve as the 42nd Executive of the General Council from the rise of the 42nd General Council (August 2015) until the convening of the 43rd General Council (July 2018)**

Moderator

- *To be elected by General Council*

Immediate Past Moderator

- Gary Paterson (2018)

General Secretary, General Council

- Nora Sanders

Conference Representatives *as elected by Conferences*

- Paula Gale – Newfoundland and Labrador (2021)
- Jean Brown – Newfoundland and Labrador (2021)
- Pauline Walker – Maritime (2018)
- Sean Handcock – Maritime (2021)
- Andrea Harrison – Montreal and Ottawa (2018)
- Rick Balson – Montreal and Ottawa (2021)
- Norma Thompson – Bay of Quinte (2018)
- Judith Evenden – Bay of Quinte (2021)
- Michael Shewburg – Toronto (2018)
- Jim McKibbin – Toronto (2021)
- Sybil Wilson – Hamilton (2018)
- Tim Reaburn – Hamilton (2021)
- Doug Wright – London (2018)
- Wendy Brown – London (2021)
- Erin Todd – Manitou (2018)
- Janice Brownlee – Manitou (2021)
- Anna Stewart – Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario (2018)
- Ken DeLisle – Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario (2021)
- Laura Fohse – Saskatchewan (2018)
- Vic Wiebe – Saskatchewan (2021)
- Sue Brodrick – Alberta and North West (2018)
- Donalee Williams – Alberta and North West (2021)

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- Graham Brownmiller – British Columbia (2018)
- Jean Macdonald – British Columbia (2021)
- Nelson Hart – All Native Circle Conference (2018)
- TBD – All Native Circle Conference

Chairperson of the General Council Planning Committee (2018)

- Larry Doyle

Chairperson of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee (2018)

- Daniel Hayward

Chairpersons of Permanent Committees (2018)

- Adam Hanley – Ministry and Employment Policies and Services
- Mary Royal – Programs for Mission and Ministry
- Brian Cornelius – Finance
- Bev Kostichuk – Governance and Agenda

Aboriginal Ministries Council (2018)

- Russel Burns
- Gabrielle Lamouche
- Lori Lewis
- George Montour
- Lawrence Sankey
- Janet Sigurdson

Members at Large (2018)

- Janice Asiimwi, youth/young adult
- Noah Richardson, youth/young adult
- Donna Rumpel
- Miriam Bowlby

Francophone Constituency (2018)

- Felix Bigirimani
- Caroline Penhale

Ethnic Ministries Constituency (2018)

- Sungmin Jung
- Vilvan Gunasingham

Representative to the World Council of Churches, Central Committee (2020)

- Miriam Spies

**Background:**

The members proposed for appointment to the Executive of the General Council have been named through the nominations processes of the Executive or of the Conferences.

## **NOM 2 APPOINTMENTS TO THE COMMITTEES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL**

**Origin:** The Executive of the General Council, Nominations Committee

**Financial Implications if known:** no change

**Staffing Implications if known:** no change

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Nominations Committee proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council 2015:**

- 1. appoint or reappoint the members recommended in the report with terms as stated:**
- 2. extend appreciation to the members listed in the report who have completed or are completing their terms of appointment.**

**Background:**

The members proposed for appointment to the committees of the General Council recorded in the Report of the Nominations Committee have been named through the authorized processes of the Executive or of the Conferences. Having followed these processes, the Nominations Committee offers these names for appointment.

## **TICIF 1 THEOLOGY AND INTER-CHURCH INTER-FAITH PROPOSAL**

**Origin: Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee**

**The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- 1. Receive the accountability report of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, together with the Committee's reports on Theologies of Disabilities and Land and Covenant, and affirm the Committee in its role of "helping the church in expressing (i) its longing for God; (ii) its theological identity, and (iii) its commitment to whole world ecumenism." (Manual E 4. 83e, p. 114)**
- 2. Commend the report on Theologies of Disabilities to the church for study and action and direct the General Secretary to provide materials for communities of faith to engage in ongoing reflection, study, worship and action in relation to theologies of disabilities.**
- 3. Direct the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee to continue in its responsibility to encourage and facilitate theological reflection throughout the church by including as priorities for the next triennium work that:**
  - Examines the theological implications of physician-assisted dying, and offers guidance on the development of a statement as well as provide support for seeking an awareness of the pastoral implications within our congregations;**
  - Develops a theological statement on adoption that will engage the church in this important issue;**
  - Engages the church in a study of theologies of land rooted in our Canadian context but opening to local and global issues;**
  - Explores jointly with the Aboriginal Ministries Council development of an interfaith study of the relationship between the United Church and Traditional Aboriginal Spiritualities.**

### **Background:**

For Background see Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee Accountability Report: and accompanying reports: Theologies of Disabilities and Land and Covenant.

## **BQ 7 A PROPOSAL TO CLARIFY SECTIONS C AND D OF *THE MANUAL***

**Originating Body:** Bay of Quinte Conference

**Financial Implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** N/A

**The Bay of Quinte Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to clarify sections C and D of the Manual to make clear that Candidates for ministry not under appointment to a pastoral charge, mission, or outreach ministry may be elected as lay delegates to their Presbytery and Conference.**

### **Background:**

This proposal seeks to clarify the sections of the Manual concerning the lay membership of Presbytery and Conference. Currently, Candidates for Ministry that are not under appointment are automatically corresponding members of both their Presbytery and Conference. Because of this automatic designation, there has been some confusion as to the ability of Candidates-not-under-appointment to be voting lay members of their Presbytery and/or Conference. This clarification makes it so that candidates-not-under-appointment will only be Corresponding members of Presbytery and Conference if they are not already elected lay members of either of those bodies.

A potential way of clarifying those sections of the Manual would be as follows (words in bold are changes to the current wording)

- Manual section C.1.3 (b) to read
  - “candidates from that presbytery who are not under appointment to a pastoral charge, mission, or outreach ministry **that are not otherwise members of Presbytery under section C.1.2;** and”
- Manual section D.1.4 (b) to read
  - “candidates from each presbytery who are not under appointment to a pastoral charge, mission, or outreach ministry **that are not otherwise members of Conference under section D.1.2 or D.1.3;** and”

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Moved by Paul Reed

Seconded by Maxine Reid

Bay of Quinte Conference carried this proposal.

## **EMAIL AND LETTER FROM BC CONFERENCE**

Karen,

Attached is the letter from the General Meeting of BC Conference for the Sessional Committee dealing with the Comprehensive Review.

I have left it in Word for easy reformatting, if needed.

As you will recall, the General Meeting of BC Conference (May 28-31) spent significant time talking about the Comprehensive Review report and its recommendations. We focused upon the two recommendations of going to a three court system from a four court one, and the establishment of a College of Ministers. Other recommendations were also discussed.

We also spoke about (but did not vote on) the Proposals that came forward related to the Comprehensive Review.

A Listening Team of four people heard all of the conversation and tried to summarize consistent themes in a PowerPoint presentation. This then came back to the court.

After being heavily affirmed, it was decided that the Listening Team would turn their points into a letter (not a Proposal) that would be sent to the Sessional Committee of the General Council dealing with these matters. In this way we avoided the usual group time spent editing a document. We also then voted on the Proposals themselves, several of which were not accepted since their subject matter would be included in the letter.

The attached letter and the Proposals already sent to you are the result. We believe they accurately reflect the major themes of our conversations at our meeting.

The letter never was intended to be (and is not) a comprehensive response to the Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group. It reflects a few hours of conversation.

We hope, though, that it is helpful to the Sessional Committee in its important, difficult work.

Shalom, Doug

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**Executive Secretary**

BC Conference, The United Church of Canada

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**The Rev. Doug Goodwin**

4383 Rumble Street, Burnaby, BC Canada V5J 2A2  
604.431.0434 (ext. 301) or (BC only) 800.934.0434 (ext. 301)  
[dgoodwin@bc.united-church.ca](mailto:dgoodwin@bc.united-church.ca)  
[www.bc.united-church.ca](http://www.bc.united-church.ca)

To the Sessional Committee of 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council,

## **RE: Comprehensive Review – Response to Proposals**

At our General Meeting in May 2015, we, the British Columbia Conference, discussed the proposals and reports put forward by the Comprehensive Review Task Force. We greatly appreciate the hard work done by the Comprehensive Review Task Force, and generally support many of their recommendations. In reviewing and discussing the proposals, however, we have become aware of some issues of which we would like the General Council to be aware. This letter is a summary of the major areas of concern that we identified. We pray that it may help supplement and further clarify the Proposals that are also being transmitted.

We support the movement to a three council model. In doing so, however, we should be cautious of the following issues:

### **Isolation**

While we believe eliminating Presbyteries is the right course of action, we have strong concerns that the lack of this middle court will cause communities of faith to become increasingly isolated. We acknowledge the Comprehensive Review Committee's suggestion to create Clusters and Networks, but we are not convinced that such inter-congregational collegiality will actually happen. Currently, and in the recent past, some regions in BC Conference have successfully formed such networks or clusters, but many other areas identify barriers such as geographic distribution, poor relationships, and lack of energy, time or interest.

### **Special Ministries**

We are concerned about what will happen to ministries that are currently funded by contributions from Conference or Presbytery budgets, such as youth ministry, children's ministry, campus ministry, community support ministries, and so on. We wish to ensure that there is provision made for these important pieces of United Church work. One possibility is that Regional Councils could support these ministries with funding through assessments to Communities of Faith in the areas in which these special ministries are operating.

### **Covenanting and Oversight of Communities of Faith**

Regarding the Communities of Faith, we have some cautions, and a couple of major concerns.

1. **Pastoral Oversight.** We agree that Communities of Faith need to have a relationship with the Regional Councils, but are concerned about the covenanting process. Firstly, we are not sure there is a need to renew such a covenant every year. Second, there needs to be a robust process for Communities of Faith to be held accountable to the Regional Councils. We are concerned that self-assessment and occasional audits may not constitute sufficient oversight.
2. **Pastoral Relations.** The Comprehensive Review Team recommends that recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing, and covenanting with ministry personnel will reside with Communities of Faith. At BC Conference we have heard a strong reaction that employment authority should not reside solely with the Community of Faith. Calls and the ending of pastoral relationships should involve the Regional Council. We believe that



the opposition to this recommendation is so strong that it would result in a defeat of any remit proposing this change.

3. **Property Management.** We believe the ownership of property serves an important role in binding us together as The United Church of Canada. We further affirm that property is, and should stay an asset of the entire church, and not just of the Communities of Faith. As such, we believe that Communities of Faith should not be able to sell their properties without the approval of a wider court of the church such as the Regional Council, and would otherwise hold these properties “in trust” for the United Church.

### **Format of Regional Councils**

We are concerned about choosing the appropriate number, geography, and size of Regional Councils across Canada. Specifically, our concerns are regarding the staffing levels of Regional Councils and what access Communities of Faith will have to these staff resources. We would need clear answers to these questions before the final adoption of this plan, since the viability of the model hinges on these issues.

### **Membership of Denominational Council**

In our opinion, if the Denominational Council includes up to two members from each Community of Faith, the potential size (4,000+ people) will be much too large for effective decision-making. Our suggestion is that Regional Councils should elect representatives to the Denominational Council and that number should be closer to the size of the current General Council. Again, the response to this recommendation was dramatic, and leads us to believe that it would be defeated at remit.

### **College of Ministers**

We affirm the desire for consistency regarding professional standards, accreditation, and disciplinary process, however we feel that BC Conference and General Council are currently doing much of this work very effectively. A College would not necessarily serve any additional purpose. We also believe that the assessment of ministry candidates should be administered more regionally than a national College. We suggest that instead of creating a College, that the Regional Councils perform personnel functions, operating similarly to BC Conference’s Effective Leadership pilot.

Additionally, among the members of BC Conference there is a great deal of confusion arising from the term, “College” when it is really a committee of General Council rather than a professional organization of colleagues as is implied by the name.

### **Finances**

Looking over the financial implications of the Comprehensive Review Recommendations, we have the following concerns:

1. Many costs are being downloaded to Communities of Faith due to added assessments, responsibility for covering costs of attending regional or denominational gatherings, and the need to also sustain networks and clusters. Transferring these formerly shared costs to individual Communities of Faith may create inequalities and exclude Communities that lack significant resources. Perhaps strategies could be developed to mitigate these issues, such as a travel pool to share the costs to Regional or Denominational gatherings.

2. Some members of BC Conference feel there is a lack of clarity regarding responsibility and source of funding for the changes to the courts. We would like to see strategic planning, transparency, and accountability of the financial implications.
3. As a Conference with some financial assets, we are very curious to know what will happen to legacy funds, bequests, and investments that Conferences currently hold.
4. In general, we are not convinced that the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review will sufficiently cut costs that address the operational problems we are experiencing in our current model.

Thank-you for considering our concerns. We trust the Holy Spirit to guide the General Council as you make these decisions. Our prayers are with you as you discern the course of our church.

In Christ,

**BC Conference of the United Church**

President Karen Medland  
Dave Anderson  
Marion Best  
Jacob Black-Lock  
Yoko Kihara

## PASTORAL LETTER FROM ALBERTA & NORTHWEST CONFERENCE



Dear Moderator and Commissioners of the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council,

Grace and Peace to you from the 2015 Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

We write to you firstly to affirm the work that has already been done by the Comprehensive Review Task Group in particular, and The United Church of Canada as a whole. It is an exciting time to be people God calls.

Our second purpose in writing is to encourage an ongoing process of dialogue as we live into new ways of being church. May we continue to be united in God's work.

In the spirit of continuing the process begun, we offer the following comments and questions as some of the fruits of the Spirit's presence at our Conference Meeting. We have chosen a pastoral letter rather than a proposal in the hopes of offering more encouragement than direction. There is still much work to be done in fleshing out the six recommendations. Our comments are more around the values and identity which ANW Conference folks named as essential to being United Church.

One key area of our discussion focused on Recommendation #3, The Three-Council Model. Ecclesiology matters. We identified the following values:

- being a national church with a diverse congregational base; and
- building community that is inclusive, and justice-oriented.

Some of the criteria we named as important in any future models of governance include (but are not limited to) accountability, communication, flexibility, efficiency, and fiscal responsibility.

Another area of discussion was around Recommendation #4, The College of Ministers. We affirmed the value of having clear professional standards and an arm's length, consistent process of review. We also named the value of having a balance of laity and clergy and the importance of covenant relationships. It is our hope that whatever structure takes shape from your deliberations, it will reflect and strengthen us as the whole people of God.

While there is a willingness to let go of buildings and governance models which no longer fit, the funding process for future assessments raised some anxiety. We also wondered about the implications of separating some administrative work from mission, when in our experience, good administrative structure increases the capacity for mission.

There are many emotions and thoughts as we hold you and your work in our prayers. Together may we leap faithfully into the future God holds.

With gratitude and respect, on behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ of Alberta Northwest Conference.

Paul Douglas Walfall  
President

Leigh Sinclair  
Past President



9911 48 Avenue NW, Edmonton AB T6E 5V6  
Telephone: 780-435-3995 Fax: 780-438-3317 Email: [coffice@anwconf.com](mailto:coffice@anwconf.com)  
[albertanorthwestconference.ca](http://albertanorthwestconference.ca)

SESSIONAL - 5



## **ANW 4 CARING FOR PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS (A RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW)**

**Origin:** Red Deer Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Red Deer Presbytery proposes that:**

**In any new organizational model which may emerge from the Comprehensive Review, there be one review process that includes both those responsible for ministers and those responsible for communities of faith, and that, wherever possible, problems in pastoral relationships be approached in ways that support, encourage and guide both the minister(s) and the community of faith.**

### **Background:**

In 2009, concerned about the stigma associated with the review process and the consequent reluctance to use it, Red Deer Presbytery proposed that General Council replace the current sections 333 (Review of Pastoral Charges) and Section 363 (Review of Ministry Personnel) with a process in which a review of the Pastoral Relationship would be the normal response of Presbyteries to crises in pastoral relationships, where Dispute Resolution Facilitation has not been successful. The concern was to make the process of review less stressful and more healing for congregations, Ministry Personnel and Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committees. This proposal was referred by the General Council to the General Secretary for action.

The recommendations of the Comprehensive Review team seem to move in the opposite direction by vesting responsibility for oversight of congregations and Ministry Personnel in separate organizations. This would mean that the governing body of a Region concerned with the oversight of a Community of Faith and a College concerned with the discipline of a minister might approach the problem with different biases, different information, and different strategies, further disrupting a fragile situation.

Ideally, oversight of Ministry Personnel and Communities of Faith would be undertaken by a single organization dedicated to the health of Pastoral Relationships.

If the division of responsibilities between a College and a Region is adopted, however, it is therefore important that there be clear structural relationships between these different organizations (for example, there could be a representative of the College on the governing body of every Region).

The financial implications of this are not clear, but it is our expectation that the costs of this proposal would be lower than having parallel and unconnected processes by a College and a Region.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Red Deer Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.  
Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

## **BC 10 CONSIDERING TERMINOLOGY USED IN *UNITED IN GOD'S WORK***

**Origin:** Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery  
**Financial Implications if known:** unknown  
**Staffing Implications if known:**  
**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council consider using *General Council* or *National Council* for *denominational council*, *Engaging the Spirit for Catching the Spirit*, and *Investigative Committee* for *Complaints Committee*.**

### **Background**

Recognizing that communication is complex, it is important that chosen terminology provides clarity, deepens meaning and understanding, and avoids inadvertent negative connotations.

1. Concerning *denominational*:
  - a. The term *denominational* seems to put the church in a box rather than allowing for opportunities to colour outside the lines.
  - b. It had been explained that there was a desire to choose something other than *General Council* since changing terminology is a way to help the transition to new structures and processes. Most involved in The United Church of Canada probably already equate *General Council* with an understanding of a body connected to the entire church. That has not changed in the proposed Three-Council Model. As well, there are many in congregations who do not concern themselves with the broader church so are currently unaware of the current structures and processes and therefore will not need the assistance of a terminology change to recognize new ones but would find comfort in hearing a familiar term in the midst of all the changes they may experience with a move to a Three-Council Model.
  - c. The other two terms used in the Three-Council Model appear to be geographic or to have a sense of place. Therefore, *national* would be a better fit.
  - d. Recognizing that there are congregations that are members of The United Church of Canada beyond the borders of Canada is a reason for retaining *General* if it is agreed that *denominational* should not be used.
  - e. There are a number of Ecumenical Shared Ministries within The United Church of Canada. The most common partner churches are the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and the Presbyterian Church in Canada. For clarity in these congregations, it would be helpful to have a distinctive term. *Denominational* is generic sounding. The terms used in the partner churches are *General Synod* (Anglican), *National Convention* (Lutheran), and *General Assembly* (Presbyterian). The elected bodies that govern the work of the church between national gatherings are known as Council of General Synod, National Church

Council, and Assembly Council respectively.

2. Concerning *Catching the Spirit*

This phrase generates some images that are not helpful.

- a. There is a sense of running after someone or something. The question is whether the chase is futile or not.
- b. There is a sense of catching something and putting it in a cage.
- c. There is a sense of catching a disease.

*Engaging the Spirit* has a sense of being interconnected, being involved, participating, hiring (or calling upon), and even doing battle (think of Jacob).

3. Concerning *Complaints Committee*

There is a sense that the committee's name needs to be more reflective of what it would be doing rather than what it would be receiving. Therefore, *Investigative Committee* is suggested.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

## **MNWO 9 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW – UNITED IN GOD’S WORLD**

**Originating Body: Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) conduct an impact study of these two recommendations (Recommendation 1 “Chasing the Spirit and Recommendation 6 “Funding the New Model) on rural and remote communities of faith within The United Church of Canada prior to implementation.**

### **Background:**

The United Church of Canada was built on smaller rural and remote congregations and still has many small rural and remote congregations, and

There is a continued decline in both membership of the church (according to the 2013 Year Book Volume I there was a 15% decline in membership from 2007 to 2012) and in the number of congregations in The United Church of Canada (according to the 2013 Year Book Volume 1 there was a 8.5% decline in the number of congregation between 2007 to 2012), and

These declines have made it more difficult to ensure the viability of congregations of The United Church of Canada, and

The “United in God’s Work” recommends that there be an average increase in assessments of 25% to help to finance the work of the church, and

An increase in assessment might force many congregations, who are just surviving, in rural and remote areas to close without leaving other options for their members to worship, and

The “United in God’s Work” also recommends that the church become intentional about funding new ministries, with the idea of connecting with technology (“Chasing the Spirit” would invest resources in technologies and training to enable communities of faith and networks to connect with each other and engage with more people, especially over long distances), and

Many rural and remote communities either don’t have the technological infrastructure or the infrastructure that they have is unreliable.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***



## **MNWO 11 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW - RECONSIDER THE NAME “CHASING THE SPIRIT”**

**Originating Body:** Assiniboine Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Pre-existing Administrative Costs

**Staffing Implications if known:** n/a

**Source of Funding if known:** Operating Expenses of UCC Regional Court

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) rename Recommendation #1 in such a way to acknowledge that God’s Spirit is everywhere and wants to be in relationship with humanity, such that we are not only chasing her.**

### **Background:**

There are theological reasons for wanting to change the title from “Chasing the Spirit” to “Encountering the Spirit.” First, we read that God’s Spirit went over the waters of Creation and so was there in the beginning in Genesis; and second, we acknowledge in liturgy and scripture how the Holy Spirit is always ready to come into our lives to make change for the better. While it may feel at times we are chasing the Spirit, that is only because we are reluctant to open ourselves to receive the Spirit into our lives and so, even deny the reality of the Spirit’s presence.

In the case of Communities of Faith and new ministries that would mean that faith communities would open themselves up to an encounter or encounters with the Spirit, the Spirit who is in all Creation ever and eternally present and available. New ministries are possible because of the presence of the Spirit of God.

**Intermediate Court Action:** *Transmitted with concurrence*

**M&O 10 CHASING THE SPIRIT**

**Origin:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council include within the scope of Chasing the Spirit recommendations, partnerships with other faith and interfaith communities.**

**Background:**

The United Church historically has worked in cooperation with other denominations and faith groups. This should be reflected in the new ministries involved in Chasing the Spirit.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **SK 10 AMENDMENT TO THE CRTG PROPOSAL: CHASING THE SPIRIT**

**Originating Body:** Saskatchewan Conference

**Financial Implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The Saskatchewan Conference proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) amend the Chasing the Spirit Recommendation by:**

- **immediately commit to supporting new ministries and new forms of ministry through an initiative tentatively called “Moving With the Spirit” or “Embracing the Spirit”,**
- **immediately commit to supporting initiatives for the renewal of continuing ministries, and,**
- **strongly encourage United Church congregations that are disbanding to give at least 10% of the net proceeds from the sale of any property to the initiative tentatively called “Chasing the Spirit”.**

### **Background:**

There is concern in the naming of this program/project, that Chasing the Spirit indicates a running after, that the Spirit is not with us. This is contrary to the experience of many in the Church. Suggesting a name change is to reflect a more interactive relationship with the Spirit.

If M&S givings are to be spent only on mission activities as described in the proposal on strengthening regional councils, (rather than a significant portion spent on program staff in the Denominational Council office and some staff in Regional Council offices) there will be sufficient funding to provide for these new initiatives that offer hope for renewal and new life within the United Church.

This report and proposal recognizes that we are in a changing time in the church. There is a movement of Emergence and Brian McLaren is one of its leaders. He is a pastor, theologian and author, and suggests that one thing the United Church could consider, in specific to this proposal of 'Chasing the Spirit', is that all funds from the sale of church property from closed churches be sequestered for the future of the church. This Proposal, suggests 30% of these funds be made available for 'Chasing the Spirit', this new, renewing, and emergent ministries in our communities of faith.

**Intermediate Court Action:** not applicable

## **ANW 8 NUMBER OF REGIONAL COUNCILS**

**Origin: St. Paul Presbytery**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) establish not less than 30 (thirty) Regional Councils to be divided equitably in order to replace the current structure of Conferences and Presbyteries, with the expectation that each Regional Council will have one full time paid staff to function in the role of Executive Secretary and Personnel Minister.**

### **Background:**

The geography of The United Church of Canada, being expansive, creates logistical challenges and regional identities.

It is the hope of St. Paul Presbytery that the Regional Council will assume the functions that are currently done by our Presbyteries and Conferences.

The Regional Council should be the body that can co-ordinate regional mission beyond the Communities of Faith.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council

## **ANW 9 ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROPOSED DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL**

**Origin:** St. Paul Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes:**

**That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) amends the proposal for the establishment of Denominational Council to include the following:**

**The membership of proposed Denominational Council be fixed at, at least 200, and not more than 300 persons with three quarters (3/4) of the membership made up of representatives from the Regional Councils, and the remaining to be determined by the Executive to ensure that minority concerns in the church are represented at the Council;**

**That the functions of the Denominational Council include:**

- 1. Oversight of the whole church**
- 2. Develop ecumenical relations at the National level**
- 3. Promote and encourage the mission of the Church on the national stage and through partnerships with other social agencies.**
- 4. Respond and offer a prophetic voice to matters of social concern at the national level.**
- 5. The recruitment, training and discipline of Ministry Personnel**
- 6. The theology of the church**
- 7. Relationships with the world Church; and**

**That the membership of the Denominational Council be made up of equal number of lay members and ministers.**

### **Background:**

The current proposal continues to concentrate the work of the Church at the national level. Given the diversity of the Canadian context an effective approach to mission would be to empower regional bodies to address and respond to the issues which address their specific context. The Denominational Council should therefore be free to address issues of national concern.

The current proposal also creates a large and organizationally unwieldy body that would be ineffective for decision making. Furthermore the costs overall to all of the church for such a body to meet every three years would not amount to good stewardship of resources by the church. A smaller body is needed. In addition to this the cost for smaller communities of faith to attend this gathering would be prohibitive even with modest grants being offered to them.

Furthermore, experience shows that the voices of smaller groups and minorities are often times drowned out when large gatherings occur unless intentional measures are put in place to ensure that their voices are heard. Given the history of the United Church as a conciliar church, it seems appropriate to maintain that style of governance. Our church has never made decisions through referenda.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference. Transmitted without concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council, with the following additional comments:

1. Alberta and Northwest Conference would like to see a mechanism for a diversity of voices on the Denominational Council; and
2. Alberta and Northwest Conference favours Denominational Council Meetings that are inclusive of representatives from Communities of Faith, but would like clarity as to how administrative decisions will be made in such a large gathering.

## **ANW 10 ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROPOSED REGIONAL COUNCILS**

**Origin:** St. Paul Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) amend the proposal for the establishment of Regional Councils to include the following:**

**That the memberships of the proposed Regional Councils include all ministry personnel, including retired ministers, ministers retained on the roll and a representative from each faith community in the region;**

**That the functions of the Regional Council include:**

- 1. Oversight of Faith Communities in the region**
- 2. Approval of calls and appointments of ministers to the Faith communities in the Region and matters of Pastoral Relations**
- 3. Develop ecumenical relations within the region**
- 4. Promote and encourage the mission of the Church in the region through the faith communities or in collaboration with other social agencies**
- 5. Respond and offer a prophetic voice to matters of social concern within the region**
- 6. Elect representatives to the Denominational Council**
- 7. Determine what structures and appointments will be needed to meet the particular realities within the context of the region; and**

**That the Regional Councils shall meet annually and, at each meeting of the Regional Council, time should be set aside for a meeting of ministry personnel for continuing education, accountability, and fellowship.**

### **Background:**

The current proposal for the establishment of Regional Councils will disenfranchise those ministers who are not in appointments within the church. Furthermore the current proposal places an undue burden on smaller faith communities to finance the attendance of representatives to the Denominational Council. The Presbytery believes that a more effective approach would be to allow for representation to the Denominational Council to come from the regional bodies with the latter paying for their representatives.

The Presbytery believes that given the work done in many Conferences on the matter of Effective Pastoral Relations over the past three years that the work of Pastoral Relations would be better done by the regional bodies.

It is also the view of the Presbytery that the work of the church should not be focused at the denominational level and that there must be a deliberate attempt made to divest some of the current responsibilities of the General Council to the regional bodies to promote and further the work and mission of the church in the regions to be established.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference  
Transmitted without concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council, with the following additional comments:

1. The Motion to Transmit with Concurrence was defeated by a non-majority of the Court (45% in favour: 47% against);
2. Oversight and accountability must be lifted up;
3. Alberta and Northwest Conference places importance on the inclusion, somewhere in the structure, all Ministry Personnel, including retired and non-active Ministers, to allow for mentorship; and
4. Alberta and Northwest Conference acknowledges that the complexity of the Proposal, due to the inclusion of three separate topics, made it challenging to support the Proposal as a whole.



## **ANW 15 GRASS ROOTS STIMULUS**

**Origin: Northern Lights Presbytery**

**Financial Implications if known: Undetermined Cost Saving**

**Staffing Implications if known: To Be Determined**

**Source of Funding if known: Present Resources**

**Northern Lights Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) consider the following possible realignment of denominational resources as an alternative to that detailed in the document, “United in God's Work”. The end goal of our alternative proposal is to redirect the resources of the whole church in such a fashion as to promote, invigorate, enliven, and challenge congregations and faith communities at the local level.**

**Step 1: Regroup congregations and ministries into presbyteries large enough to afford an executive presbyter, a secretary/treasurer, and an itinerant supervising minister.**

**Step 2: Devolve the current duties which now belong to the Conferences into the Presbyteries, and eliminate the Conferences.**

**Step 3: Have a College of Ministers for admissions and accreditation processes. The College would also run the formal hearings when needed. However the presbytery/regional body would handle basic oversight, first level complaints processes, and pastoral relations work around calls and appointments.**

### **Background:**

Although we appreciate the work that went into “United in God's Work”, and are, indeed, grateful for the stimulus it has provided for much needed discussion and re-imagining as we try to determine the best way in our present context to be faithful, Spirit-led disciples of God in Christ, we fear that, if implemented, remote and rural faith communities will be the ones who most acutely will bear the brunt of proposed structural changes and cost cutting. We also fear that an Association of Ministers may not function nearly as well as a presbytery. Finally, in order to provide quality control over the admission of candidates and their final approval for entry into United Church ministry, it might be simpler to have a national commission of capable persons named by General Council. Again, these persons would not need to live in one particular place, but rather could live among the people, and therefore be aware of the needs for ministry in a great variety of contexts.

We recognize there is a need to cut spending. We believe this proposal addresses challenges related to spending and respectful use of volunteer time within our local communities. We also believe that most presbytery/regional bodies would be able to function with 1 to 2 FTE paid positions, depending on geography and population.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Northern Lights Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted without concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council, with the following additional comments:

1. The Motion to Transmit with Concurrence was defeated by a non-majority (48%) of the Court; and
2. Alberta and Northwest Conference wishes to register its concern for isolated and rural communities when discussing future structure of the church.

## **BC 1 CONCERNING COVENANTS**

**Origin: Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery**

**Financial Implications if known: The funding implications are unknown at this time.**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery proposes that:** the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council:

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council eliminate the requirement of Covenants between Communities of Faith and the Regional Councils in the United in God's Work Proposal: A Three Council Model.**

### **Background**

There is no rationale given for the creation of the Covenants between Communities of Faith and the Regional Council.

Nowhere in the report or background material are we told that should we adopt a new Governance Model that existing Communities of Faith would no longer be part of The United Church of Canada and that each would have to rejoin by covenant as implied in the Three Council Model Proposal pages 4 and 5.

There is confusion regarding the frequency of the making and renewal of covenants. (e.g. Report & Background material say renewed yearly, p.21. Proposal #3 Three Council Model says a Covenant would happen but has no mention of yearly renewals, p. 4)

If Covenants were made yearly as suggested in the Report & Background material, we may find ourselves in a chaotic state if Communities of Faith refuse to covenant based on theological, financial, or other reasons. What would happen to the Minister, the mission of the Community of Faith, or the Property?

The responsibilities outlined in the Sample of Covenant could easily be delineated within the body of Three Council Proposed Model Itself.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

## **BC 12 AMENDMENTS TO “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”**

**Origin:** BC Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**BC Conference proposed that:**

**The 42nd General Council amend the proposals of "United in God's Work" in the following ways:**

- 1. the number of Regional Councils, will be no fewer than 10, to reflect the diversity and breadth of our geography, and to be close enough to communities of faith to adequately respond**
- 2. Strengthen the power and authority of Regional Councils by:**
  - a) budget and assessment setting happen at Regional Councils, with the Denominational Council providing their financial needs for inclusion in the budget process of the Regional Council**
  - b) financing the governance of the church at the Regional Council level, and Mission and Service operations at the Denominational level**
  - c) having Regional Council staff, including Regional Secretaries, be employed and accountable to their Regional Councils**
  - d) having the General Secretary of the Denominational Council be equal in power and authority to the Regional Secretaries**
- 3. Locate funding and staffing within the Regional Councils to support all other mission and ministry priorities, including (but not limited to):**
  - a) leadership formation and development, both lay and ordered**
  - b) congregational support and oversight**
  - c) local and global mission**
- 4. Affirm that denominational staff and resources focus on the following priorities:**
  - a) leadership in global mission and partnerships and ecumenism**
  - b) denomination-wide communications**
  - c) pensions, benefits and payroll**
  - d) support for denominational policy, including (but not limited to) standards for qualification of ministry personnel and conditions of employment**
  - e) support for the Moderator**
  - f) organizing the denominational gathering**
  - g) administering the Mission and Service Fund**

**5. Reduce the number of participants and the cost of the denominational gathering, by Regional Councils electing a smaller number of delegates**

**6. Deletion of the College of Ministers, leaving membership, formation and oversight of ministry personnel within Regional Councils; and establish a national office of Vocation to register ministry personnel and keep records, and processing formal hearings and complaints**

## **Background**

Core Principles upon which this proposal is based:

1. General support for a three council model with an adequate number of well-funded Regional Councils.
2. The community of faith is the primary mission unit of the church.
3. The Regional Council is the most effective place to vest support and accountability for vital communities of faith, and resources for leadership and congregational development.
4. General support for continuing our historical identity and commitment to holding a healthy tension between congregationalism and conciliar relationships and accountability.

## **Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

**BC 13 RESPONSE TO “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”**

**Origin:** BC Conference

**Financial Implications:** unknown

**Staffing Implications:**

**BC Conference Proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council amend the proposals of “United in God’s Work” in the following way:**

**That both Communities of Faith and Ministry Personnel have the responsibility and authority to request changes of pastoral relationship, and that the final decision-making responsibility and authority on changes of pastoral relationship rest with the Regional Council.**

**Immediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

## **BQ 1 RENEW THE CURRENT STRUCTURE**

**Origin:** Bay of Quinte Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

The Bay of Quinte Conference proposes that:

The 42nd General Council (2015):

1. **Implement the Comprehensive Review Funding model proposal.**
2. **Withdraw the Comprehensive Review College of Ministers proposal.**
3. **Allow the Effective Ministry and Healthy Pastoral Relationships pilot projects to complete their work, share their findings, and discern best practices for separating oversight, discipline, and the needs assessment-search process.**
4. **Retain the current 4-Court structure but revise it, among other possibilities, in the following way: Presbytery/District – to be supportive of ministers and communities of faith but not in disciplinary oversight of them. (Covenants, mission articulation, supporting students, sharing creative and temporal resources, and growing in connectedness would become the primary work of Presbyteries/Districts, with the possible addition of the needs assessment-search process, depending upon the learnings of the Effective Ministry and Healthy Pastoral Relationships pilot projects.)**
5. **Retain the current 4-Court structure but revise it, among other possibilities, in the following way: Conference – to include the disciplinary oversight of ministers and Pastoral Charges as per the findings of the Effective Ministry pilots. (Presbyteries/Districts would listen and support, Conferences would act on conflicts or discipline.)**
6. **Support dialogue among Conferences to explore effective ways to distribute the proposed 60 administrative plus 15 M&S supported staff through creative partnering, sharing, merging, or redrawing Conference boundaries.**
7. **Expand the current team of persons skilled in conflict resolution, reviews, and hearings in lieu of creating a College of Ministers (accreditation and oversight to be done at the Conference level).**
8. **Facilitate a national dialogue on the role and function of the General Council Office and the General Council triennial gathering within the ethos and governance of the United Church.**

## **Background**

The scripture verse grounding GC42 is well chosen: “*Behold, I make all things new*” (Revelation 21:5). One interpretive tack is to draw on Isaiah 43:19 “*Behold I am doing a new thing!*” Another interpretive tack is to read this verse not as “*making all new things*” but as “*making all things new.*” This later path emphasizes how God redeems, God reshapes, God renews.

The Comprehensive Review was a mandate to discern a structure that would allow us to live within our human and financial resources as a church. In the process of that discernment and “making all new things” some of the fundamental aspects of the ethos of our church have been challenged. Principles such as shared ministry and balance between clergy and laity in the courts of the church, access to the wisdom of all ministry personnel and retirees, property held in trust for the whole church, and nearby support and accountability for communities of faith are potentially being set aside without a full dialogue.

Manageable pieces such as replacing needs assessments with annual mission reviews and replacing triennial visits with annual missional check-ins as the primary oversight work of Presbyteries/Districts promote a positive, supportive and accountable second court. The ability to flag potential concerns early and refer to Conference for additional support or potential formal review or discipline is critical for maintaining healthy mission-focused communities of faith.

The financial realities requiring staffing cuts would be achieved as Conferences sought creative approaches to carrying out their work and organize and distribute the proposed 60 administrative staff plus 15 M&S supported staff throughout the church, possibly by sharing certain staff, merging or changing Conference boundaries, etc. In addition, the financial saving from not having a College of Ministers would provide the minimal funding most Presbyteries would need to carry out their responsibilities under this model. If more funding were needed, either the assessment could be increased, or the proposed 60 administrative positions could be reduced slightly in number.

Significant discussion concerning the size, scope, role, and function of our General Council Office and General Council triennial gathering is needed before we can authentically discern appropriate revisions to our current model. Cost concerns for the General Council meeting have not been addressed in this proposal. Potential solutions such as reducing the number of delegates, cost sharing, assessments, etc. could all be explored without changing the structure.

Renewing the current structure in light of the goals of simplified structures and processes to unburden people and free them for ministry and mission, expanding communities of faith beyond congregations, leveraging our strength of being united, separating support and discipline, and creating a transparent funding model is not only possible but preferable in that it greatly reduces the number of potential remits required to make significant progress and greatly reduces the potential chaos of either failed remits or trying to implement something “all new.”

## **Intermediate Court Action:**

Bay of Quinte Conference voted on each item in-seriatim and carried all of them.



## **BQ 4 A RESPONSE TO THE FINAL REPORT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP**

**Origin:** Bay of Quinte Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Should be feasible within the proposed funding model  
(Proposal #6 – Comprehensive Review Task Group Final Report)

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Bay of Quinte Conference proposes that:**

**should the 42nd General Council support the recommendation to move to a three court model, the “middle court” must be geographically smaller than the present Conferences, and that Staff be located closer to communities of faith than in the proposed regional model.**

### **Theological Rational**

Excerpt from *A Song of Faith: A Statement of Faith of The United Church of Canada*

*Each part of creation reveals unique aspects of God the Creator,  
who is both in creation and beyond it.*

*All parts of creation, animate and inanimate, are related. All creation is good.*

*We sing of the Creator,*

*who made humans to live and move and have their being in God.*

*In and with God,*

*we can direct our lives toward right relationship with each other and with God.*

*We can discover our place as one strand in the web of life. We can grow in wisdom and  
compassion.*

*We can recognize all people as kin.*

*We can accept our mortality and finitude, not as a curse, but as a challenge to make our  
lives and choices matter.*

It is as we are in relationship with one another that we can truly live out the Gospel of love.

### **Background**

The Comprehensive Review Task Group prefaced their report by stating: “We believe God is doing a new thing and is calling The United Church of Canada to be part of a new creation.” Hills and Shore Presbytery would fully support that premise; we also believe that within that new creation congregations are still the backbone of The United Church of Canada.

We all need to feel connected to something greater than ourselves. Every church would welcome opportunities for growth and learning.

A vast majority of United Church Pastoral Charges are rural; rural churches are often smaller and already feel isolated and disconnected from the larger church.

If the new “regions” are larger than our present conferences travel time alone would exacerbate the isolation not improve it. Each area would need to perceive that someone is close enough to feel like a relationship is a possibility.

Networking will only happen when a sense of community is built and faith communities connect; creating a Staff model that brings staff closer to faith communities will help nurture the sense of connectedness

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Bay of Quinte Conference carried this proposal.

## **LON 1 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” NAMING THE “DENOMINATIONAL” COUNCIL**

**Origin:** Lambton Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** Unknown

**Lambton Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Act so that the body referred to as the Denominational Council in the United in God’s Work be given another name, i.e. United Church Council, General Assembly, General Council.**

### **Background:**

In light of the history of the United Church, having been formed by the union of four denominations, we consider the use of the word “denominational” as inappropriate. We also consider it a mouthful.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 2 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” NAMING OF DENOMINATIONAL COURT**

**Origin:** Tecumseh United Church Board in Essex Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** Limited – Part of editing and review

**Source of Funding if known:** None

**The Tecumseh United Church Board in Essex Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) eliminate the term “Denominational” as part of the description of one of the courts in the proposed three court model. We propose that terms such as “General Council or “New General Council” be used.**

### **Background:**

The term “Denomination” suggests an adherence to a church “club” with a clear sense of who does or does not belong. It does not reinforce or encourage the renewal and revitalization envisioned with “Chasing the Spirit”. “Denomination suggests exclusiveness and limitations on acceptance. The strength of the United Church is its message of acceptance of people attempting to find their way in living out the gospel in responding to the call to discipleship. The spirit of an evolving understanding is not immediately associated with the term “denomination”. It also hearkens back to more traditional and entrenched church structures.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Approved by the Official Board, TUC April 19, 2015.

Transmit with concurrence. Essex Presbytery, Tuesday May 19, 2015.

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 3 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” A PROPOSED NAME FOR THE DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL**

**Origin:** Ruthven Pastoral Charge, within Essex Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** None

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** None

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:** None

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:** None

**The Official Board of the Ruthven Pastoral Charge proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) name the Denominational Council in the Three Council Model, “The Assembly of The United Church of Canada”.**

### **Background:**

The term ‘Assembly’ is quite common when governments have a bicameral (2 parts) legislature. It would be quite fitting in the Three Council Model for the Denominational Council to be called The Assembly of The United Church of Canada.

The term ‘Denominational’ is vague and awkward. It is especially odd when combined with the term Council.

The term ‘Assembly’ indicates a gathering of people coming together. In Greek the word for assembly is ‘ekklesia’. The term, ekklesia, has great significance in the history of the Church.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Official Board, Ruthven Pastoral Charge, May 13, 2015

Transmit without concurrence. Essex Presbytery, Tuesday May 19, 2015.

**London Conference:** Did not agree, transmit without concurrence

London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 4 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” REPRESENTATION TO GENERAL COUNCIL**

**Origin:** Lambton Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Less expense

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** Regional and/or Denominational Assessment

**Lambton Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) amend the CRTG 3 proposal so that:**

- 1) representatives to Denominational Council be limited to the present size of the General Council;**
- 2) nominations be made by Faith Communities, but representatives be elected at Regional Council;**
- 3) the cost for representatives be financed through the assessments of regional and/or denominational councils.**

### **Background:**

The proposal of two representatives from each faith community would create an expensive, unwieldy body that would be difficult to co-ordinate and plan for.

The proposal to have each faith community pay the costs for their representatives would create an undue burden on individual churches and could limit participation. Sharing the costs throughout the region or country would encourage the participation of those most interested.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Did not Agree, but carried to transmit with the following recommendation:

“General Council to determine a manageable number of representatives not necessarily limited to the present size of General Council.”

London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 5 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATION AT THE DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL**

**Origin:** London Conference Youth Forum

**Financial Implications if known:** to be determined

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unknown

**Source of Funding if known:**

**London Conference Youth Forum proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- 1) Affirm its commitment to youth and young adult participation in the courts/councils of The United Church of Canada;**
- 2) Ensure that provisions are made for youth and young adult participation in all three Councils identified in Recommendation 3 of United in God’s Work, The Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group;**
- 3) Affirm that this involvement should be at no less a percentage than provided by existing levels;**
- 4) Direct the General Secretary, General Council, to provide for youth participation through the cost sharing envisioned for a gathering of the Denominational Council.**

### **Background:**

At the March 21-23, 2015 meeting the Executive of the General Council affirmed the Youth and Young Adult (YAYA) Ministry Strategy 2015-2018 ([http://www.united-church.ca/files/general-council/gce/2015/gce\\_1503\\_workbook.pdf](http://www.united-church.ca/files/general-council/gce/2015/gce_1503_workbook.pdf) found on page 156) and directed the General Secretary, General Council, to implement this strategy in the 2015-2018 triennium.

YAYA is overlooked in the Report, “United in God’s Work”, and there is no provision for youth and young adult involvement in any of the Councils.

Currently, the degree to which youth and young adults are involved in the courts of the church is determined regionally. Each Conference determines whether any of its General Council Commissioner positions will be dedicated to youth and young adults. Because Commissioners are elected by Conference, there is no guaranteed number of youth and young adult participation in decision-making at the General Council. Youth Forum has traditionally offered the General Council the benefit of input from youth.

The consideration of a new model makes this an ideal time to set a standard for youth and young adult involvement in all Councils of the church.

At General Council 41.5 (1%) Commissioners were under 18 and 44 (12%) Commissioners were 19-30. In addition over 50 youth participated in Youth Forum and had the privilege of adding

their voice to the discussion.

For General Council 42, with the new model of Youth Forum, each Conference was asked to ensure that at least the young person participating in the pilgrimage be named a Commissioner. At General Council 42, it is hoped that there will be at least 13 Commissioners under 19 plus a further 26 youth named as corresponding members of the court.

Both of these models provide for roughly 10% or more of those able to speak to be youth. There are also those youth and young adults serving as Commissioners. There is no provision for at least this as a minimal level of involvement in the new model. The goal would be to maintain or increase the involvement of this age group.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015



## **LON 14 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” ACCOUNTABILITY OF REGIONAL COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Glenwood United Church within Essex Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown but expectations of more transparency and input

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unknown at this time

**Source of Funding if known:** Assessment protocol

**The Official Board of Glenwood United Church proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- A. Implement a review in 2020, by The United Church of Canada, to evaluate the success or failure of the Three Council Model**
- B. Discuss any decisions arising from the review process with the Executive of the Denominational Council prior to implementation.**

### **Background:**

People have expressed their fears about increased assessments by possibly reducing their Mission & Service offerings at recent presbytery and informational meetings.

Because of long lists of demands that the “ National Church “ has had to prioritize through the years, now is the right time to let another group control the procurement of money by assessment. The church is being forced to downsize in staffing and projects as congregations grow smaller and concentrate on incremental change to attract new people.

Humbling ourselves and realizing why we are present will enable us to grow in new ways. At present, we need to continue to tighten the belt in order to rapidly stabilize our situation. ”Pie in the sky “type answers will only destroy our credibility when people are looking to the church for substance and meaningful conversation.

This task is entirely doable and passes the test of conformity to democratic principles. This achieves the standard of extending the right of grass-roots members to attend an Annual Meeting each year. One lay person and one order of Ministry person may attend from a Community of Faith. By doing this, people realize the opportunity to have their voice heard. It is the expectation that authority flows up and that leaders at the denominational council serve as our representatives.

Having a 3 year wait time between meetings does not satisfy the expectation of accountability and it is a common practice to evaluate after 5 years when dramatic changes occur within organizations. The question has to be addressed. ”Did we do the right thing?”

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Official Board, Glenwood United Church, April 27, 2015

Transmit with concurrence. Essex Presbytery, Tuesday May 19, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 25 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” MINISTERS ATTACHED TO COURTS**

**Origin:** Kent Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** None

**London Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that Members of the Order of Ministry, both active and retired, and Recognized Designated Lay Ministers retain their membership in a proposed Regional Council rather than within a local community of faith.**

**Background:**

“United in God’s Work” proposes that membership of the Order of Ministry and Designated Lay Ministers would be in the local community of faith. Only Ministry Personnel serving in a local community of faith would be eligible to participate in the Regional and Denominational Council and, among those serving, only one of the ministry personnel at a local community of faith would be eligible.

Given that our theological understanding of the order of ministry and designated lay ministry includes responsibility to the whole church and not just the local context, that our Reformed heritage encourages ministry personnel to be in personal, accountable and supervised relationships with ministry peers and lay people and that continuity of ministry leadership and service are important to the stability of mission of The United Church of Canada, lodging the membership of ministry personnel only in the local context does not support these goals.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

London Conference: Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

**Conference Comment:**

*This is a replacement proposal incorporating ideas expressing fully ideas captured in part in proposals from Essex Presbytery, Kent Presbytery and the Executive of Middlesex Presbytery.*

## **LON 26 BALANCED REPRESENTATION ON REGIONAL AND DENOMINATIONAL COUNCILS**

**Origin:** London Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**London Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council ensure that the model for determining the composition of the proposed Regional and Denominational Councils be adjusted as necessary to follow the principle of balanced representation of each of two groups:**

- i) members of the order of ministry and designated lay ministers**
- ii) lay members other than designated lay ministers.**

### **Background:**

Several proposals may affect the composition of the proposed councils. This proposal indicates our desire to maintain the principle of balanced representation.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

### ***Conference Comment:***

*This proposal was crafted following adoption of London 25: Comprehensive Review Task Group “United In God’s Work” Ministers Attached to Courts, to ensure that the adoption of a membership model for ministers would be sensitive to the lay/ministry personnel balance of the region.*

## **MAR 5 EXISTING SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORKS AND THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW**

**Origin:** Chignecto Presbytery, Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:** none

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Chignecto Presbytery, Maritime Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council:**

- a) **strongly affirms the work of the United Network for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) and the United for Mining Justice Network (UMJN) networks.**
- b) **That these networks be directly and significantly involved in any future discussions surrounding Comprehensive Review and how networks can support the social justice ministry of the denomination under a new structure.**
- c) **That a representative of each network be made an ex-officio member of the Permanent Committee – Programs for Mission and Ministry (PC-PMM) until a new structure evolves.**
- d) **mandates the General Secretary to assist with negotiations for appropriate Director’s insurance for the networks so they can speak truthfully and bravely to the church and other power structures.**

### **Background**

1. Currently, UNJPPI and UMJN have no direct ties to the General Council. UNJPPI was incarnated by the GCO to help with the work mandated by GC 41 with respect to Palestine and Israel. UMJN has evolved out of United Church groups who had been working on the issue of Canadian mining interests being involved in human rights violations in foreign countries.

Both networks play a significant role in these two key social justice issues within the denomination. Both provide thousands of volunteer hours.

The leadership of these networks take seriously the Biblical call to proclaim social justice. These networks stand in solidarity with our international partners who have turned to The United Church of Canada seeking our support in their struggle to have their voices heard in our churches and beyond.

To date, there has been no formal acknowledgement, affirmation or appreciation expressed for their ongoing work and commitment from either General Council Office or General Council.

2. Currently, there has been no direct or indirect contact with UNJPPI or UMJN about the future of social justice work in the denomination even though the Comprehensive Review provides an appendix to the main report and notes the key role networks will play in animating the social justice ministry of The United Church of Canada.

It would make sense for these networks who already understand the struggles and the blessings of their existing structure to provide direct input into how we might effectively embrace the concept of networks as we explore how to live out God's call to work for social justice.

3. Currently, the Permanent Committee (PC) - Programs for Mission and Ministry has not invited the networks to provide any input directly to the PC which could assist the PC in supporting the work mandated by the General Council

An ex-officio role on the PC would allow the networks to remain free and independent of the PC and the current power structure within the denomination while still being able to be build relationships. PC-PMM and the networks would mutually benefit from a closer relationship through improved alignment regarding these key social justice issues.

4. The leadership of the networks face the prospect of vexatious lawsuits from those who hold power and privilege in Canadian society. Yet, the networks who work faithfully and diligently on behalf of the denomination are not afforded the same protection as officers of the courts of the church because under our present structure this is not possible. Ironically, the leadership of the networks often function in other roles in various courts of the church where they are covered by the insurance policy of the United Church.

In order to support the work of these networks and allow them to focus on the issues where they have expertise it makes sense to have the GCO staff with expertise in insurance help negotiate on behalf of the networks with The United Church of Canada insurance provider.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Mary White / Sean Handcock moved that the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #5 entitled "Existing Social Justice Networks and the Comprehensive Review" to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada; and take no action on Proposal #14 entitled "United for Mining Justice Network" and #15 entitled "United Network for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel" as they are covered in Proposal #5.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **MAR 9 AN ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE TO THE PROPOSED “COLLEGE” OF MINISTERS**

**Originating Body:** Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications:** unknown

**Staffing Implications:** Approximately the same number of staff as the proposed College of Ministers, distributed with approx. 1/3 at the Denominational level, and 2/3 at the Regional level

**Source of funding:** unknown

**Maritime Conference proposes that as the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group regarding oversight and discipline of ministry personnel are being considered by the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council, 2015 that:**

- (1) Standards for training and accreditation, and discipline of ministry personnel be the responsibility of the denominational body, and that**
- (2) the recognition, support and oversight of ministry personnel be the responsibility of the Regional Council.**

**These responsibilities will be administered in the following manner:**

**1. Denominational:**

- (a) Disciplinary procedures for all ministry personnel, including the administration of the Discontinue Service List, both disciplinary and voluntary**
- (b) The authority to determine the definition of ministry and its requirements and standards of recognition within the church**

**2. Regional Responsibilities:**

- (a) Training and oversight of ministry personnel would be administered through an elected committee of regional council, with appropriate staff support**
- (b) Candidacy and Education and Students processes would be implemented at the regional level.**
- (c) Ministry Personnel, including retired ministry personnel, would be covenanted members within their Regional Body.**
- (d) Consideration would be given to the size of regional bodies to ensure accessibility to communities of faith.**

### **Background to 1. Denominational Responsibilities**

- There is a confusion of terms concerning what constitutes a membership association and a regulatory body. *United in God's Work* presents the nomenclature and status of a “College” without the pursuant legislative requirement to be a self regulatory governing body. For this purpose alone, we would recommend not using this term as it is misleading in both larger

society and law. We believe the use of the term “Federation” is much more in keeping with the cut and thrust of the report’s proposal.

- A **Federation** is the uniting of a national body, composed of provincial and/or regional entities each retaining their own control of internal affairs while being supported by a National voice and perspective.
- Avoiding the requirements of a College will allow the church to stay true to the vocational and covenantal roots of the United Church rather than vying for a quasi professional status. *United in God’s Work* recommends a change to a profession of ministry. In the public realm, the regulation of professions are basically the regulating of transactions between the public and the professionals where governments are expected to ensure the public has some form of protection. We believe this understanding alone is not compatible with the rich vocation of ministry currently practiced and understood in The United Church of Canada.
- The specific legal authority transferred from government to the profession’s regulatory body varies with different regulatory models. A Federation would allow for professionalism without the need for stringent government oversight. Under our proposal we still preserve the emphasis of highly skilled professionals exercising discipline of ministry personnel through the Federation.
- Given that government selects from different regulatory approaches, based on the nature of the activities performed by the profession’s members and the extent to which the public might be harmed if an incompetent member of a profession provided services (ministry), how then can this aspect of government oversight be ignored in the establishing of a professional College as *United In God’s Work* seeks to propose?

## **Background to 2. Regional Responsibilities**

- There are potential difficulties with pastoral relationships that make it necessary to remove oversight and discipline of ministers from the local jurisdiction. Complexities in these relationships require higher levels of specialized information and skills. At the same time, it is desirable for this oversight to be able to respond as early as possible when difficulties arise, and for this oversight to be aware of the local context.
- By removing oversight and discipline from the regional level, we risk having an uninformed response because one is less aware of regional particularities. It would also require the added expense of further travel.
- The best balance would be to have the oversight responsibilities rest at the regional level, while the corrective disciplinary responsibilities would reside at the denominational level.
- The work of the Steering Group on *Candidacy Pathway of The Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services* has been monitoring the Candidacy Pathway pilot project currently underway in BC, Manitou and Bay of Quinte Conferences. It provides favourable insight into a ministry oversight and evaluation model administered almost entirely at the regional level which is especially poignant in the Bay of Quinte Conference where all decision-making powers are held at this level (see “Interim Report of the Steering Group on Candidacy Pathway” Record of Proceedings of the 41st General Council, 2012). These pilot projects have effectively assumed a model of centralized authority much similar to that proposed by the College model, with the exception that such authority lies at the regional rather than denominational level.

*Sources:*

Manitoba Law Reformed Commission (1994). *Regulating professions and occupations*.  
Winnipeg: Manitoba Law Reform Commission

Bayles, M.D. (1988). Profession power and self regulation. *Business and Professional Ethics Journal*, 5(2), 26-43

Glen, E. Randall, (2000). *Understanding profession self regulation*. Toronto Ontario

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett / Mary White moved that the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #17 entitled “An Alternative Structure to the proposed “College” of Ministers” to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**



## **MAR 11 FOSTERING GATHERINGS OF YOUTH**

**Origin: Maritime Conference**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Maritime Conference Proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council directs that in the responsibilities of Regional Councils be included the responsibility for fostering gatherings of youth.**

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett / Sean Handcock moved that the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #24 entitled “Fostering Gatherings of Youth” to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **MNWO 1 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: ATTENDANCE NUMBERS OF GENERAL COUNCIL**

**Originating Body:** Agassiz Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct that the membership of the Denominational Council determine by election at Regional Councils or other regional bodies in a manner that retains our commitment to balanced representation; and that the membership size of the Denominational Council be no greater than the membership of our current General Council.**

### **Background:**

The proposal for General Council will create a Denominational Council whose size will be unwieldy for effective process and decision making; will restrict representation to congregations or faith communities able and willing to send delegates.

It will eliminate our commitment to ensuring balance among clergy, lay, gender and a voice for youth.

It makes no provision differences in the size of faith communities, discriminates against clergy who are retained or retired, or are in team.

**Intermediate Court Action:** *Transmitted with concurrence*

## **MNWO 3 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: THREE COUNCIL MODEL**

**Originating Body:** Assiniboine Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) amend the Three Council Model proposed by the Comprehensive Review Task Group as follows:**

**That instead of large regional councils as the middle council we have small clusters of about a dozen communities of faith with responsibilities for ministry covenants, celebrations of ministry and accompaniment of candidates and that all other decision making responsibilities reside with the communities of faith or the denominational council.**

### **Background:**

It is important for communities of faith to connect with one another for mutual support and accountability.

It has been suggested that Regional Councils will be larger than current Conferences, making them more distant from local communities of faith.

It is expensive to maintain staff at the Regional Council level when we are trying to streamline the church. It is easier for smaller bodies to know the reality on the ground in individual communities and to offer appropriate collegial support as neighbours to communities of faith in times of joy and struggle.

As smaller, local gatherings are more cost effective, easier on the environment, and allow for more relationship-building amongst communities of faith because the gathering would be smaller and probably able to meet more frequently. Too often our current courts get caught up in administrative work and have a limited ability to build community amongst people.

Possible responsibilities could be as follows:

1. Clusters replace Regional Councils in the proposed Three Council Model and keep the name “cluster” as it suggests a community of communities rather than a governing body.
2. That Clusters be small and locally based involving about 10 communities of faith with the specific numbers in each cluster being determined by local geography.
3. The membership of the clusters be as follows:
  - a. *all ministry personnel in paid accountable ministry with communities of faith in the cluster,*
  - b. *one lay representative from each community of faith in the cluster,*

- c. *any retired or retained ministry personnel residing in the cluster who choose to be involved in the cluster.*
- 4. That clusters meet at least annually with specific meeting frequencies being determined by local realities.
- 5. That generally, clusters would not have budgets or staff and appropriate costs for travel and communications would be covered by the communities of faith for their representatives. The only time clusters would have staff would be if they have covenanted together for a particular mission project in their area. The funding of such endeavours would be agreed upon by the cluster.
- 6. Clusters would have the following responsibilities as currently assigned to the Regional Council in the proposed Three Council Model.
  - a. Authority and Responsibility for Covenanting:
    - i. recognizing a new community of faith by entering into a covenantal relationship with it
    - ii. entering into a covenant with each community of faith, with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;
  - b. Oversight:
    - i. reviewing and periodically auditing the self-assessments of communities of faith in light of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council;
    - ii. assuming control of a community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational policies;
  - c. Services to Communities of Faith:
    - i. providing support, advice, and encouragement to communities of faith
    - ii. ministry personnel and others—except to the extent any of the following responsibilities have been otherwise assigned through the United Church’s legislative process:
    - iii. celebrating retirements
    - iv. appointing persons (a) to accompany a candidate on their pathway to ordination or commissioning, and (b) to make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to the candidate’s fitness and readiness for ministry;
    - v. appointing a person (a) to supervise a candidate in an internship, and (b) make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to the candidate’s fitness and readiness for ministry;
    - vi. ordaining or commissioning each candidate approved by the College for ordination;
    - vii. admitting ministers from other denominations who have been approved by the College for admission;
    - viii. readmitting ministers who have been approved by the College for readmission;
    - ix. recognizing designated lay ministers; and
    - x. licensing lay members as licensed lay worship leaders.

7. The following responsibilities from the current proposal assigned to the Regional Council be assigned to the Denominational Council possibly offered through regionally based staff or archives locations, if appropriate, but administered nationally.
  - a. Services to Communities of Faith:
    - i. providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in human resource matters;
    - ii. providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in dealing with congregational property;
    - iii. creating policies for buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith and other property and the distribution of such proceeds;
    - iv. managing regional archives;
    - v. providing leadership training for ministers and lay persons;
    - vi. overseeing camps and incorporated ministries in the region.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted without concurrence. The Court decided to transmit all proposals related to the Comprehensive Review.***

## **MNWO 5 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: LAY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION**

**Originating Body:** Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

*All of above three lines could be financed in the 10% funds allocated to transforming and new ministries*

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) commit to providing resources that will ensure adequate education, training, support and oversight for lay leaders in the future structures of The United Church of Canada at a denominational or regional level.**

### **Background:**

Educated and experienced lay leadership has always and still is a significant part of United Church congregations and ministries and is especially vital to the well-being of congregations and ministries with less than full-time paid accountable staff.

Programs for education and training of lay people have been offered by United Church Education Centres, and by some Theological Schools and Programs, which were supported and encouraged by the Conferences and Presbyteries where they were located. Presbyteries encouraged participation of lay leaders in such programs as Licensed Lay Worship Leadership and Sacraments Elders training.

The new 3-council model of the church proposed by the Comprehensive Review Task Force recognizes the importance of vibrant and self-sustaining communities of faith which will include leadership by both Order of Ministry and the laity.

The declining income for many smaller congregations will result in more part-time ministries, which will be difficult to fill in rural and more remote locations, thereby emphasizing the importance of strong lay leadership. New expressions of communities of faith may have no order of ministry staff and be entirely reliant on lay leadership.

In the proposed 3-council model there is no clearly identified commitment to provision of education and training for lay people. There is no clear location in any level of the 3-council model of accountability or responsibility for ensuring support, training or oversight for lay leaders.

**Intermediate Court Action:** *Transmitted with concurrence*

## **MNWO 10 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: STAFF PERSON FOR SUPPORTING TRANSFORMING EXISTING MINISTRIES AND LAUNCHING NEW MINISTRIES**

**Originating Body:** Assiniboine Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Pre-existing Administrative Costs

**Staffing Implications if known:** May require travel within regions

**Source of Funding if known:** Operating Expenses of UCC Regional Court

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) ensure that the denominational council ensure that financial support from assessments be available for a staff person, who is familiar with local/regional context, to support and resource the development of new ministry initiatives, whether developing new ministries or transforming existing ones.**

### **Background:**

In the description of the Regional Court of Recommendation #3 (page 21 of report), it states: “Regional Councils would perform some, but not all, of the functions of current Presbyteries and Conferences. They would covenant with and provide advice, support, and services to Communities of Faith in such areas as human resources and property. They would accompany students, provide mentors and appoint supervisors for internships, and celebrate ordinations, commissioning, admissions, recognitions, and retirements. They would support and provide Communities of Faith with connections to national and global partners for social justice and outreach activities. They would also ensure communities of Faith are living up to their covenants, attempt to resolve disputes, and step in if a Community of Faith is not functioning effectively or failing to meet its responsibilities. The proposed model would require the church to rationalize regional structures and staffing by amalgamating Conferences or sharing staff and resources across separate Regional Councils.” The understanding so far, is that there would be an Executive Secretary and another staff person to do the above work. But what is not mentioned in the description above is “New Ministries,” which (according to *United in God’s Work*) all Communities of Faith are encouraged to develop. These “New Ministries” would need some special attention and support of Regional Councils.

As a national church we share responsibility to support the development of new ministries of various forms. We are confident that most groups envisioning new ministry initiatives will not have all the expertise to develop and consider staffing implications, or business considerations within their group. As a Church we want to support new ministry initiatives so that they will have firm foundations on which to grow. We recognize that staff with dedicated paid hours to support those envisioning a new ministry initiative will increase the likelihood of success for that initiative. We would consider this staff position as a permanent national, permanent regional or contracted position whose sole responsibility would be to support and resource groups in the development of new ministry initiatives to make them viable, and eventually self-sustaining.

**Intermediate Court Action:** *Transmitted with concurrence*

**SESSIONAL - 49**

## **MNWO 12 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: REGIONAL COUNCILS SHOULD BE APPROPRIATE SIZE**

**Originating Body:** Assiniboine Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Pre-existing Administrative Costs

**Staffing Implications if known:** Staff Travel Costs

**Source of Funding if known:** Operating Expenses of UCC Regional Court

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) consider and deliberate on the size of Regional Councils, of “United In God’s Work,” to be a maximum number of 20 hours of travel one way to a regional meeting.**

### **Background:**

This is a very important issue especially to rural churches. Presbyteries and Conferences already struggle with the reality of Canadian Geography and how it impacts meeting attendance and meeting costs. As we already have some very large Conference regions, the Regional Council’s geographic area should not be any larger than 20hours total travel time across, if meetings can be held in different locations; if meetings were held in a central location all the time then a maximum of 20 hours travel time to the centre of the Region would be reasonable. It is not just the cost to Regional Council that is an issue, there is always a cost to the volunteer who leaves home early to travel to a meeting. The volunteer’s time and the risk taken to put in long hours of driving need to be considered.

Canada is called the most urbanized country in the world for a reason—most of its major cities are near the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel and USA / Canada border. While most of our members are in urban centres we need to keep in mind that is a social privilege, and not the reality of some of our most vulnerable members.

**Intermediate Court Action:** *Transmitted without concurrence. The Court decided to transmit all proposals related to the Comprehensive Review.*



## **MNWO 13 ORDER OF MINISTRY AND “UCC MEMBERSHIPS”**

**Originating Body:** Assiniboine Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** n/a

**Source of Funding if known:** Operating Expenses of UCC Regional Court

### **The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) change “United in God’s Work,” Recommendation #3, A Three-Council Model, to have members of the Order of Ministry have their United Church membership held by a body other than that of a local community of faith.**

### **Background:**

“Given that our theological understandings of ministry include an ordered minister’s service and responsibility to the whole Church, and not only local contexts; and that our Reformed heritage encourages ordered ministers to be in personal, accountable, and supervised relationships with ministry peers and lay people; and that the continuity of ministry leadership and service are important to the stability and mission of The United Church of Canada; and that lodging ordered ministers’ memberships only in a local context does not support these goals; I move that Assiniboine Presbytery/Conference ask the General Council 2015 that, when the CR is implemented post-General Council, members of the Order of Ministry be counted as members of the Regional Council rather than of a local community of faith.”

**Intermediate Court Action:** *Transmitted with concurrence*

## **M&O 1 ALTERNATIVE THREE-COUNCIL MODEL IN DIALOGUE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP REPORT**

**Origin:** The Ottawa Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Within the same financial framework offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group Report.

**Staffing Implications if known:** Within the same staffing framework offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group Report

**Source of Funding if known:** n/a

**Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council direct that:**

- a) **a mission statement for each of the three councils be included in the three-council model;**
- b) **a section on the Executive for each of the three councils be included in the three-council model**
- c) **there be a consistency in the description of the three councils; and**
- d) **the substance is found in the background material.**

**Background:**

### **1. COMMUNITIES OF FAITH**

#### ***A. Description:***

A community of faith is any community of people within the United Church that:

- gathers to explore faith, worship, and serve and can include congregations, outreach ministries, faith based communal living, house churches, and online communities; and
- is recognized as a community of faith within the United Church by the regional council through a covenantal relationship between the community of faith and the regional council.

#### ***B. Membership***

The members of the community of faith would be:

- people admitted to membership by the community of faith, within the guidelines of the denomination, including members of the order of ministry;
- eligible for election to represent the community of faith in the denominational council and regional council;
- entitled to vote on all community of faith matters and entitled to extend the right to vote on financial and administrative matters to adherent

#### ***C. Authority and responsibility***

The community of faith would have authority and responsibility for:

##### ***mission***

- Helping members deepen their faith while exploring their faith journey by joining

collective hearts, voices and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society

- entering into a covenant with the regional council that sets out guiding values, principles, and responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith
- doing annual self-assessments of the ministry of the community of faith and filing the report with the regional council;

***governance and administration***

- making decisions about the life of the community of faith including worship pastoral care, spiritual practice and learning, local administration and governance, finances, local mission, justice, and evangelism;
- meeting at least annually and electing officers and an executive;
- setting policies for membership, and receiving and celebrating new members in the community of faith;
- complying with denominational and regional policies;
- buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith property;

***encouraging lay ministry and supporting members considering a vocation in ministry***

encouraging members to consider ministry roles a responsibility shared through the whole community of faith;

- recommending to the appropriate body suitable lay members as inquirers, candidates, and licensed lay worship leaders, as and if required under denominational policy;

***participation in regional council and denominational council***

- choosing two representatives to the regional council of which up to one can be Ministry Personnel or a member of the order of ministry.
- funding the cost of sending representatives to the meetings of the regional council;
- choosing two representatives to the denominational council of which up to one can be Ministry Personnel or a member of the order of ministry.
- funding the cost of sending representatives to the triennial meeting of the denominational council; and
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from members of the community of faith to regional councils.

***D. Limitations***

All authority and responsibility of the community of faith would be subject to:

- policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council;
- the terms of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council; and
- the authority of the regional council to assume control of the community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

**E. Executive of the Community of Faith**

The executive of the Community of faith would be the decision-making body for the Community of Faith between meetings of the membership of the Community of Faith

- **Size:** a fixed number determined by the Community of faith (and in the cases of very small Communities of Faith can include the whole membership)
- **Membership would include:**
  - A Chair
  - Paid Accountable Ministry Personnel (if any)
  - Other elected members from the Community of Faith
- **Authority:**
  - Dealing with all routine and emergency work of the Community of Faith between meetings of the Community of Faith in keeping with the policies of the Community of Faith and The United Church of Canada

**F. Staffing**

The Community of Faith may recruit, choose, call, appoint, and covenant with ministry personnel and other staff, and may end calls, appointments, and covenants with ministry personnel and other staff

- All those in paid accountable ministry must be a member of the College or its equivalent.
- All non-ministerial staffing must adhere to the policies established by the denominational council

**2. REGIONAL COUNCILS****A. Description**

A regional council would be a regional decision-making body within the United Church comprised of approximately 100 to 150 Communities of Faith, or larger if regionally determined.

**B. Membership**

The regional council would be composed of:

- Two representatives for each community of faith which can include up to one Ministry Personnel or member of the order of ministry.

**C. Authority and Responsibility**

The regional council would have authority and responsibility for:

**mission**

- To join collective heart, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, with a specific focus on the vision for mission and ministry within the boundaries of the region;
- providing support services to communities of faith especially those communities of faith in transition
- supporting the emergence of new communities of faith;
- facilitating and supporting partnerships among communities of faith, including clusters and networks.

**covenanting with and providing services to communities of faith:**

- entering into a covenant with each community of faith, setting out guiding values, principles and responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith;
- recognizing a new community of faith by entering into a covenantal relationship;
- reviewing and periodically auditing the self-assessments of communities of faith in light of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council;
- assuming control of a community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational policies; providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in human resource matters;
- providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in dealing with congregational property;
- creating regional policies for guiding communities of faith when buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith and regional property
- creating regional policies on the distribution of proceeds from the sale of property, oversee and approve the sale and the distribution of proceeds from the sale of property
- providing leadership training for ministers and lay persons as determined regionally;

***governance and administration***

- meeting at least annually,
- administering policy set by the denominational council;
- determining additional regional policies, if any.
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from communities of faith to the denominational council based on denominational policy;
- setting and managing its annual budget and setting any additional regional assessment for additional services the regional council wishes to undertake;
- participating in determining priorities for mission and ministry work through the Mission and Service Fund;
- managing regional archives;
- overseeing camps and incorporated ministries in the region;

***recognizing ministry personnel and those considering a ministerial vocation***

- celebrating retirements;
- appointing persons (i) to accompany a candidate on their pathway to ordination or commissioning, and (ii) to make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to the candidate's fitness and readiness for ministry;
- appointing a person (i) to supervise a candidate in an internship, and (ii) make a recommendation to the College or its equivalent as to the candidate's fitness and readiness for ministry;
- ordaining or commissioning each candidate approved by the College or its equivalent for ordination;
- admitting ministers from other denominations who have been approved by the College or its equivalent for admission;
- readmitting ministers who have been approved by the College or its equivalent for readmission;
- recognizing designated lay ministers; and

- licensing lay members as licensed lay worship leaders.

#### ***D. Limitations***

All authority and responsibility of the regional council would be subject to:

- policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council;
- the terms of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council; and
- the authority of the denominational council to assume control of the regional council in extraordinary circumstances where the regional council is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

#### ***E. Executive of the Regional Council***

The executive of the regional council would be the decision-making body for the Regional Council between meetings of the entire membership of the Regional Council

- ***Size:*** a fixed number set by the Regional Council.
- ***Membership:***
  - A President
  - Regional Secretary (a Regional Secretary may serve more than one region)
  - Lay members and members of the order of ministry elected by the Regional Council based on the need for named competencies as well as ensure diversity of voices
- ***Authority:***
  - Receiving an Accountability Report from the Regional Secretary on the effectiveness of delivering support and services to Communities of Faith.
  - Dealing with all unfinished matters referred to it by the regional council
  - Dealing with all routine and emergency work of the Regional Council that cannot wait until a gathering of the whole Regional Council

#### ***F. Staffing***

Each region would have staff to assist the regional council in meeting its responsibilities:

- staffing would be based on assessments, grants from the Mission and Service Fund, and any other regional income;
- staffing would be based on priorities and needs as determined regionally;
- staff would be hired and managed by a regional secretary who reports to the General Secretary of the denominational council; and
- regional councils with more resources would be free to hire more staff, and sharing of all resources across the church would be encouraged.

### **3. DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL**

#### ***A. Description:***

The denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church as both a denomination and a legal corporation.

**B. Membership**

The denominational council would consist of:

- Two representatives from each community of faith which can include one Ministry Personnel or order of ministry;
- the presiding officer or elder of each regional council;
- the immediate Past Moderator;
- the retiring Moderator; and
- the General Secretary of the denominational council.

**C. Authority and responsibility**

The denominational council would have authority and responsibility for:

***mission :***

- to join our collective hearts, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world.
  - setting policies for the denomination on doctrine, worship, membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and the entrance to paid accountable ministry;
  - making decisions on denomination-shaping issues relating to public witness;
- to serve as national voice for the denomination; and to work with ecumenical and inter-faith partners for a compassionate and just witness both in Canada and around the world

***governance and administration:***

- electing a Moderator;
- electing the executive of the denominational council;
- referring all unfinished matters to the executive of the denominational council;
- meeting once every three years in person, with members having the option of participating through electronic or equivalent means;
- meeting more frequently as required by secular law through electronic or equivalent means;
- approving the number and boundaries of regional councils and supporting them; dealing with proposals received from regional councils;
- setting a three-year budget framework for the church and determining the assessment of communities of faith for the three-year period;
- determining for communities of faith the cost of sending representatives to the triennial denominational council meeting by setting a standardized fee for all participants that would include travel costs; and
- maintaining the denominational archives.

***supporting ministry personnel and those considering a ministerial vocation***

- by financially supporting A College of Ministers or its equivalent

**D. Limitations**

This proposal does not affect the limitations that exist at the current time:

- ***remit:*** the Basis of Union may only be changed through the remit process, which requires the approval of a majority of the presbyteries and also, if the General Council considers it advisable because the change is substantive or denomination-shaping, pastoral charges;

- **membership requirements:** no terms of admission to full membership may be prescribed other than those laid down in the New Testament;
- **freedom of worship:** the freedom of worship enjoyed by churches at the time of union in 1925 may not be interfered with in the United Church;
- **property:** all policy on congregational property adopted by the denominational council must comply with the requirements set in The United Church of Canada Act, 1925.

#### ***E. Executive of the denominational council***

The executive of the denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church between meetings of the denominational council, within the following terms of reference:

- **size:** a fixed number between 12 and 18 members, with the exact number set by the denominational council
- **membership:**
  - the Moderator
  - the General Secretary of the General Council
  - a representative of the Aboriginal Ministries Council
  - lay members and members of the order of ministry elected by the denominational council based on regional council nominations and the need for named competencies as well as Aboriginal, francophone, racialized, and other diverse voices; and
- **authority:**
  - Receiving an Accountability Report from the General Secretary on the effectiveness of the staff in supporting the work of the denominational council.
  - dealing with all unfinished matters referred to it by the denominational council
  - dealing with all routine and emergency work of the denominational council between meetings of the denominational council
  - establishing standing and other committees, with the chair of each such committee to be a member of the executive of the General Council
  - exercising additional authority and subject to any limitations as set by the denominational council

#### ***F. Staffing***

The denominational council would have staff to assist it in meeting its responsibilities through:

- staffing based on assessments of communities of faith, grants from the Mission and Service Fund, and other denominational income;
- staffing based on the priorities and needs as determined nationally;
- administering denominational policies;
- providing centralized technical services such as information technology, communication, payroll, accounting, human resources, administration, and pension plan;
- Supporting the Moderator; and



- providing leadership in global partnerships and national-level ministry and mission work.

#### 4. CLUSTERS AND NETWORKS

Alongside the structure, there would also be:

- **clusters:** local clusters of communities of faith that would provide community and support for communities of faith and their leaders, and focus on worship, mission, learning, collegiality, and strategic planning; and
- **networks:** linking people working on specific issues (e.g. supportive housing, intercultural ministry, youth ministry) or for project work (e.g. event planning) that function through the whole church, depending on the issue.

**And that the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the elimination of the transfer and settlement processes for members of the order of ministry within the United Church, including the elimination of the General Council Transfer Committee and Conference Settlement Committees;**

**And further, that the 42nd General Council 2015 authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the reorganization and polity changes set out above.**

#### BACKGROUND:

In reviewing the proposal for a Three Council Model offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group, the Ottawa Presbytery expresses support that The United Church of Canada change from its current four-court structure (Pastoral Charge, Presbytery, Conference, General Council) to a three-council Model (Communities of Faith, Regional Councils, Denominational Council).

However, while the Ottawa Presbytery is supportive of the direction offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group, the Ottawa Presbytery does offer some substantive and significant changes to the proposal offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group. These changes include

1. Clarifications in “Authority and Responsibilities” of all three councils
  - a) Ottawa Presbytery is of the view that there be a consistency in the descriptions of the three Councils under “authority and responsibility.
  - b) Specifically, Ottawa Presbytery notes the importance of mission and has included and provided content to the “mission” of each of the three Councils (the original proposal only had mission under “Communities of Faith). The Ottawa Presbytery has drawn upon the wording in the “principles” explicated by the Comprehensive Review Task Group on page 12 of its report by using the phrase *joining our collective, hearts, voices and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society.*
  - c) In addition to outlining covenantal responsibilities, the Ottawa Presbytery believes that the covenants between Communities of Faith and Regional Councils also include guiding values and principles.

- d) For consistency purposes, all activities linked to “governance and administration” were grouped under one heading.
  - e) For consistency purposes, all activities related to support for Lay Leadership, Ministry Personnel, and those considering a vocation in ministry were grouped under one heading
2. Specification that at least two representatives from each Community of Faith be possible at all times, even those communities of faith without Ministry Personnel  
Ottawa Presbytery supports the principle that decision-making within the church be at least 50% laity and wishes to ensure the full participation of Communities of Faith who do not have Ministry Personnel. Ottawa Presbytery proposes that all Communities of Faith have two representatives to Regional and Denominational Councils of which up to one can be Ministry Personnel or order of ministry. This adjustment of policy will likely ensure a “tilt” towards lay representation.
  3. Specification of an “executive” for Communities of Faith and Regional Councils  
In the proposal of the Comprehensive Review Task Group, only the denominational council had explicated terms for an Executive. Ottawa Presbytery sees the values of explicating the existence and terms of an executive for all three Councils and uses the model offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group for the Denominational Council for the remaining two Councils.
  4. Consistency in how each Council is staffed  
In the proposal of the Comprehensive Review Task Group, staffing of Communities of Faith was included in “authority and responsibility” while separated in the other Councils. For consistency, staffing of Communities of Faith is now a separate category.
  5. Direction on the size of Regional Councils  
Given that the Regional Councils are a decision making Council and that many of these decisions directly impact Communities of Faith, Ottawa Presbytery is of the view that the size of Regional Councils not be so large as to make them “remote” from Communities of Faith. For Ottawa Presbytery, it seems prudent that there is not too great a geographic distance between the Regional Council and the Communities of Faith. While recognizing the diversity that exists across the country and the need for regionally determined solutions, Ottawa Presbytery proposes that Regional Councils consist of 100 to 150 Communities of Faith unless it is regionally determined that the Regional Councils be larger.
  6. Direction on the Relationship of Regional Staff and Denominational Staff to the Executive.  
Given that The United Church of Canada is a church based on effective democracy, Regional Councils need to reflect a democratic voice by meeting at least annually (perhaps more often), democratically elect officers and an Executive, and ensure that staff have clear accountability structures to the Regional Council through its Executive.

7. Provide emphasis that Regional Councils focus on providing support services to Communities of Faith.

The Ottawa Presbytery supports empowerment of Communities of Faith through the reduction in the responsibilities of the proposed Regional Councils as compared to those now exercised by Conference and Presbyteries. Ottawa Presbytery supports the notion of covenant instead of oversight, though the Presbytery recognizes the need for oversight on sale of properties and adequate mechanisms to deal with situations where employment conditions are unacceptable. While many Communities of Faith will find this new organizational direction energizing, others will find the challenges associated with renewal and transformation daunting. For this reason, it is important for Regional Councils to provide effective support during this time of change and renewal. This requires an emphasis on the service aspect of Regional Council responsibilities so that energy is tilted towards supporting Communities of Faith as they deal with emergence and transformation as these Communities of Faith discern and implement new directions for their ministries. Some will with need support as they face closure. Regional Councils can also provide support through this change by encouraging Communities of Faith to find strength in clustering with one another.

8. Ensure that the Regional Council must provide clear guidelines and policies for disbursement of proceeds realized in the sale of property and other capital as well as approve and oversee the disbursements of such proceeds.

Ottawa Presbytery is of the view that Regional Councils must provide more than guidelines in the distribution of proceeds from sale of property and have an approval mechanism in place.

9. Explicate that the Denominational Council be responsible for funding the supports for the provision of a College of Ministers or its equivalent.

Ottawa Presbytery is of the view that the funding and provision of the College of Ministers or its equivalent be within the budget framework of the Denominational Council.

10. Funding Participation of Communities of Faith in the Denominational Council

Ottawa Presbytery concurs that the funding of participation in the Denominational Council come from Communities of Faith. For clarity sake, the cost of travel is included in the standardized fee. The Presbytery is of the view that “bursaries” not be offered because the amount and terms of these “bursaries” is not explicated. The Ottawa Presbytery is of the view that it is better not to promise something that may not be deliverable.

11. Support for maintaining the direction outlined by the Comprehensive Review Task Group in “Funding a New Model”.

Regional Councils will need to operate within the financial resources available in keeping with the principles of “Funding a New Model” proposed by the Comprehensive Review Task Group. To this end, Ottawa Presbytery supports the following principles:

- a. Encourage the use of home offices for regional staff and the purchase of office supports such as photocopying and other services from local Communities of Faith

- b. Sharing of staff across Regional Council boundaries such as appointing Regional Secretaries who might supervise staff across several Regional Council.
- c. Regional Staff remuneration mirror the Ministry Personnel Compensation scale.
- d. Regional Executives conduct most if not all of their meetings through teleconference or other technologies minimizing expenses for travel.
- e. Costs for Regional gatherings be shared equitably among Communities of Faith.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

This Proposal was approved by Ottawa Presbytery.

The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 2 NUMBER OF REGIONAL COUNCILS**

**Originating Body:** Seaway Valley Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Division of Assessments equitably between regions

**Staffing Implications if known:** Equitable staffing between regions

**Source of Funding if known:** National Assessment (if applicable)

**Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council direct that:**

**the Regional Councils be comprised of approximately 100 to 150 communities of faith (20-30 regions), leaving open the option of larger Regional Councils if desired.**

### **Background:**

Canada has a huge landmass in which many of our communities of faith struggle to maintain collegiality and community with one another. The report 'United in God's Work' before GC 42 implies (though never names) a smaller number of Regional Councils to replace Presbyteries and Conferences. At this time, there are over 900 presbyteries and 13 conferences. The number proposed is in line with the year 2000 remit to the Church and in keeping with the ethos of contextuality and reasonable localness in administration.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Seaway Valley Presbytery voted non-concurrence.

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

### **M&O 3 REPRESENTATION AT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL**

**Originating Body:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council direct that:**

**each community of faith may choose two representatives to participate in regional council and denominational council of which up to one can be Ministry Personnel or a member of the Order of Ministry.**

#### **Background:**

1. Whereas one of the principal drives behind the commissioning of the comprehensive review was to give direction to the church on ways to reduce our costs and live within our means
2. Whereas the rejection of regional representation in favour of representation of every community of faith on the National Council will vastly increase travel costs ( to be paid by each community of faith) and meeting costs ( to be incurred by the National church)
3. Whereas a meeting of such a large group would make decision making unwieldy and thus increase the possibility that decision making would, in reality, be done by a small executive
4. Whereas the United Church has a long history of favouring democratic decision-making over hierarchical top-down decision making

#### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 4 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: STRENGTHEN COOPERATION AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER CHURCHES**

**Origin:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Net impact should be marginal

**Staffing Implications if known:** Net impact should be marginal

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes:**

**That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council direct that:**

**the mission of the Denominational Council include: “to serve as the national voice for the denomination; and to work with ecumenical and interfaith partners for a compassionate and just society both in Canada and around the world.”**

### **Background:**

Originating in serious resource challenges, the Comprehensive Review Report proposes sweeping changes in The United Church of Canada intended to free the Church to “Chase the Spirit” in new ways, while respecting new realities—a strong new pillar to uphold the Church’s values and its work. The vision is empowering but does not go far enough.

There is a risk that the changes proposed will not deal adequately with the problems enumerated, that more and more churches will continue to fold; and that ties among and between local communities and regional and national bodies will weaken and some even disappear, despite the creation of non-binding clusters and networks. All churches are facing similar constraints, some more immediate, but all carry debts to the future coming due in foreseeable time frames. All churches worship one God; all follow one Leader. All denominations acknowledge Jesus’ plea that this lead to greater common purpose among them.

The United Church in its origin and stated goals describes itself as a united and uniting church. Yet the Comprehensive Review Report, addressing fundamental issues related to the future viability of the Church, hardly mentions relationships outside the church. It focuses on internal matters. But this is only part of the story—part of the opportunity and the potential response. It is time to resume actively imagining and carrying through “the policy of the United Church to foster the spirit of unity...” (The Basis of Union 1.2) among those who follow Jesus Christ and those of like mind and purpose. The crises (and the opportunities) before the Church are no less important now than then. This would offer a second strong pillar.

The hope would be that the body of Christ in the world would be prepared to respond to the urgent beckoning of the Spirit and work together toward a future we cannot yet fully see but where we are confident we will continue to find God already present before us, acting and inviting. Such enhanced common purpose and action would strengthen the ability of various parts of the body to be an effective presence in ministering to “the poor and needy” of all sorts

and conditions (i.e. to Christ); and strengthen the message of good news that Jesus still speaks to all.

While the openness should be broad, initial conversations might begin more modestly, such as with The Anglican Church of Canada, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and possibly some others, as well as examining ways with groups such as KAIROS to develop, strengthen, and deepen the relationship, and with the Canadian Council of Churches to find new and more active channels for working and speaking together more broadly.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.



## **M&O 5 PASTORAL OVERSIGHT**

**Originating Body:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** co-ordinating time from Conference Personnel Minister, as well as volunteer time and energy

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**That Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council direct that:**

**in the Three Council Model that there be greater clarity in Regional Council processes for accountability to nurture, enable and respond to Communities of Faith who are not meeting their covenantal commitments or need support in meeting their covenantal commitments; processes including but not limited to:**

- a) informal and formal Conflict Resolution;**
- b) adherence to all denominational policies including employment and workplace Health and Safety standards.**

### **Background:**

Amongst the most important activities of the church is mutual oversight and care. Visitation of Pastoral Charges, were envisioned to offer support, encouragement and guidance, and to ensure the effective work of the pastoral charge/mission unit. Pastoral relations oversight meant that each new call or appointment was reviewed to ensure that it conformed to the policies of the United Church, for the protection of both the Church and of personnel. From time to time, informal and formal processes were needed to address conflict or other large problems.

Restructuring of the church should not interrupt the ongoing support and protection that these pastoral oversight functions provide; however, the model proposed currently in “Chasing the Spirit” does not articulate how these oversight functions will be presented.

While there is currently a proposal to implement a College of Ministers, it will be important to outline the responsibility of the presbytery or future regional body, and role of the College of Ministers, so that personnel have adequate oversight, support in times of dispute, and recourse after decisions are made.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 8 AMENDMENT TO THE THREE COUNCIL MODEL REGARDING DELEGATE PARTICIPATION AND VOTING AT DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL MEETINGS**

**Origin:** Peggy Kinsley, Presbyter, Ottawa Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** modest

**Staffing Implications if known:** some additional staff time will be required

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) amend the Proposal “A Three-Council Model,”  
Section 3, Denominational Council, C. Authority and Responsibility,  
Finance and Administration, by adding the following text:**

**“While the attendance in person of delegates elected to the Denominational  
Council is preferable, provision will be made for delegates not able to attend  
the triennial meeting or other meetings to participate and vote remotely:**

- a) Live streaming of the Council deliberations be broadcast**
- b) For delegates who do not have facilities for viewing live streaming,  
that such facilities be provided in a convenient location**
- c) Delegates who have the electronic facilities be given a secure, legal  
means to vote electronically in real time.”**

### **Background:**

I believe it is imperative that all elected delegates be given a fair chance to participate and vote. Otherwise, there could be unfair representation by either region, rural and urban communities of faith, lay versus ministry personnel. Equal representation between ministry personnel and lay participants does not achieve proportional representation by any stretch of the imagination. If one does not build in procedures to allow all delegates to participate, this situation could be exacerbated even more.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

This Proposal was not supported by Ottawa Presbytery.  
Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 9 EVALUATION AFTER IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW CHANGES**

**Origin:** Peggy Kinsley, Presbyter, Ottawa Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**that the 42nd General Council (2015) define objectives/ desired ends for each of the major or important changes proposed; educate the church on these objectives; decide upon indices to measure the degree to which these will have been attained; specify evaluation timeframes, varying by item, and report on the outcome of the evaluation process to the wider church.**

### **Background:**

Setting specific objectives linked to indices for how progress toward them is to be assessed helps everyone better understand what is being done and to contribute toward its attainment. Having difficulty defining such objectives and their associated indices is a mark of a poorly planned change. Setting a review period provides the impetus to identify and actually fix things which didn't work out as wished.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

This Proposal received strong support from Ottawa Presbytery. Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 13 ENABLING JUSTICE WORK THROUGH TIMES OF CHANGE**

**Originating Body:** JGER Committee of Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Staff salaries and programme funding

**Staffing Implications if known:** prioritizing of justice work

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission & Service Fund

**The Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council:**

- 1. Mandate that an enabling level of expertise and allocation of denominational staff be dedicated to facilitating justice work including the following areas:**
  - a. Eco-justice/environment/climate change**
  - b. Refugees**
  - c. Global Partnerships**
  - d. Water and Food Security**
  - e. Economic Justice – which can be integrated into all areas of justice work;**
- 2. Mandate that staff working regionally incorporate justice work into their staff plan and collaboration with networks;**
- 3. Mandate identification, as clearly as possible, of the areas of justice work that will be animated or resourced by the expertise and capacity of denominational staff.**

### **Background:**

We witness to our faith in a just and life-giving God by advocating for justice and peace. “The founders of this church believed that ours is a living faith, a faith that is expressed not only in ministry, but also in mission in and with the world.” (<http://www.united-church.ca/justice>)

The document, *Toward 2025: A Justice-Seeking/Justice-Living Church*, notes that, “It is important that the elements of a justice-seeking/justice-living church do not remain as ideals that we ascribe to and claim as part of who we are, but rather that we seek to define concrete steps necessary for us to live out these characteristics.”

([http://www.gc41.ca/sites/default/files/pcpmm\\_2025.pdf](http://www.gc41.ca/sites/default/files/pcpmm_2025.pdf) )

It is evident, through our projected number of denominational and regional staff funded by M&S (82 staff, 55 at the denominational office, 12 regionally deployed denominational staff, and 15 regional staff \*), that the United Church will not be able to maintain its current level of justice work by denominational staff. Some important areas of our justice work, such as Indigenous justice and right relations, are specifically mandated in the Comprehensive Review. Denominational and regional staff are generally mandated to do justice work as part of their

overall mandate. It is expected that much of the justice work of the United Church will take place in networks.

It would be easy for any of the four areas of justice work listed in the proposal to become overlooked or marginalized, and all are areas of increasing urgency in our time. We are becoming increasingly aware of the impact and implications of climate change, and that how we live on our planet impacts the future viability of all species, including humans. Climate change, environmental destruction and contamination, war and political instability are also causing increased human migration and numbers of refugees.

Participation in partnerships has become an essential part of social justice work within local communities of faith, across Canada, and in the global context. The assumption of this proposal would be that the UCC continue substantial organizational support to partners such as Kairos, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Citizens for Public Justice and church bodies such as Canadian Council of Churches and World Council of Churches. The work of these organizations provides staff, resource development, and mutual support for our justice work.

The United Church has developed incredible expertise within its staff, who themselves have become integral members of regional, national and global networks. “Doing work” is so much more than having assigned portfolios. “Reassigning portfolios” to remaining staff can cloud the fact that we have lost both expertise and capacity to do some of the work that we had seen as important. Clearly identifying what justice work will be animated by national staff, and the justice work that will no longer be nationally resourced, enables regions, networks, and collectives/clusters and individual communities of faith to know where the resource people are, and to determine how they themselves might animate justice work.

\*see Backgrounder 10 – Finances, Table 5, page 8)

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 17 RECOGNITION IN PRINCIPLE OF FRANCOPHONES**

**Originating Body:** Consistoire Laurentien

**Financial implications if known:** None

**Staffing implications if known:** None

**Source of funding if known:** None

**The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council:**

- a) **Reaffirm that the francophone presence is fundamental and essential to the national identity of The United Church of Canada;**
- b) **Request that any future structural change include measures to ensure a continued and dynamic presence for this facet of the church's identity;**
- c) **Work explicitly to prioritize the consolidation and development of our church's French and bilingual missions and ministries as a vitally important part of its national identity.**
- d) **Ensure that the recommendations of the National Strategy for Ministries in French adopted by the Executive (PMM 14 of the General Council Executive, November 2014) be incorporated into the planning and budgeting process for the next three-year period and encourage the follow-up and implementation of the said Ministries in French Strategies.**

### **Background:**

The United Church strives to be relevant and sensitive to different realities across the country and, consequently, is positioning itself to be able to better respond to the needs of a constantly changing society. In order to foster the development of French ministries, the Executive of General Council approved a bilingualism protocol recognizing that The United Church of Canada is an officially bilingual church (PMM 8, French Language Translation Strategy, March 2014) and a National Strategy for Ministries in French (PMM 14, General Council Executive, November 2014).

The United Church of Canada is currently undergoing a major transition in order to better fulfill its mission to a Canadian society that is searching for spirituality in a time of rapid change.

Francophones constitute 25% of the Canadian population. This segment of the population, which is concentrated in Québec but present across the entire country, is a vitally important domestic mission field for The United Church of Canada. A significant number of migrants and immigrants from French-speaking countries settle in all regions of Canada.

For historical reasons, French-speaking Canadians (one quarter of the population) remain largely unaware of The United Church of Canada, while at the same time the church's French ministries continue to be marginalized, unnoticed or, even worse, subject to generalized indifference.

In 2014, the Executive of General Council ratified a bilingualism protocol recognizing that The United Church of Canada is officially bilingual.

In 2009, the 40th General Council meeting in Kelowna declared that "Francophone ministries are an integral part of the identity, mission and vision for the future of The United Church of Canada."

The proposals arising from the Comprehensive Review, however, do not give the Ministries in French a clearly defined and adequate place in the new structure and we want in this time to build on decades of affirmative efforts.

The United Church of Canada's witness in French should be clearly visible and explicitly recognized as part of the church's national identity, for the credibility of that witness to a quarter of the country's population is at stake. To achieve this, The United Church of Canada must ensure that its francophone constituency has real and effective means of decision-making.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Consistoire Laurentien voted concurrence

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 18 FRANCOPHONE DECISION-MAKING NETWORK OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

**Originating Body:** Consistoire Laurentien

**Financial implications if known:** None

**Staffing implications if known:** None

**Source of funding if known:** Denominational Council and Mission and Service Fund

**The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council create a decision-making francophone Network, with no fixed territory, to be composed of representatives of all French, bilingual and allophone ministries and communities of faith doing recognized ministry in French. This decision-making francophone Network be accorded the rights arising from the new structure and would:**

- a) **Be composed of representatives of all ministries and communities of faith (current and future) for whom French is at least one of the languages spoken as well as of staff and institutions (United Theological College, community ministries, chaplains) working in French;**
- b) **Be responsible for:**
  1. **Stimulating the creation of new ministries;**
  2. **Supporting existing ministries as they develop or transition;**
  3. **Increasing The United Church of Canada's visibility in French;**
  4. **Identifying sources of funding for existing and future ministries;**
  5. **Ensuring that when ministries come to a close, their experience and heritage is passed on;**
  6. **Sharing experience and nurturing a vision and a desire for creativity in the development of ministries in French;**
- c) **Function and hold meetings in French;**
- d) **Make decisions pertaining to overall strategies for ministries in French and hold the corresponding powers, specifically to:**
  1. **Establish the criteria to be used in deciding which new forms of ministry are to be supported by the "Chasing the Spirit" fund and establish criteria for evaluating new ministries at the end of their trial period;**
  2. **Appoint candidates to the seats reserved for persons associated with French ministries at the decision-making table of the College of Ministers;**
  3. **Appoint candidates to the two seats reserved for persons associated with French ministries on the Denominational Council Executive;**
  4. **Choose the members of the College of Ministers subcommittee responsible for training for ministries in French;**



- e) **Receive a budget specifically allocated for the work with Francophones, with one part to come from the Denominational Council for operational activities and another part to come from the Mission and Service Fund for support and development activities targeting both existing communities and the establishment of new ministries. In regions of the country where the French-speaking population represents a majority or a significant minority, a fixed proportion of each region's budget shall be allocated to work targeting the Francophone population.**

**Background:**

The United Church of Canada aims to be accessible to anyone seeking spirituality, whatever their cultural or linguistic identity, and is committed to providing services in Canada's two official languages: this is the vision and objectives of The United Church of Canada for French and bilingual ministries.

In 2009, the [40th General Council](#) meeting in Kelowna enthusiastically adopted [[pp. 280 to 284](#)] the report "[A Vision for French Ministries in The United Church of Canada](#)" [[pp. 719-730 in French and pp. 730-741 in English](#)] declaring that "Francophone ministries are an integral part of the identity, mission and vision for the future of The United Church of Canada." That General Council committed "the Church to strengthening and expanding ministries in French and instructed the General Council Executive to implement the report proposals."

The General Council Executive also received proposals to prepare recommendations "on how the Francophone constituency can assume greater responsibility in decisions and policies affecting Ministries in French (MiF) either within existing structures or new emerging structures" (GCE November 2011).

At the current time, Ministries in French participate in the regional and national connexional tables in order to facilitate their collaborative work. These tables have no decision-making powers, which limits their impact on the consolidation of ministries.

The creation of a decision-making francophone Network as proposed herein responds to this prophetic vision as well as to the real needs of the Francophone constituency. This vision has been manifest throughout the history of the United Church and is now, more than ever, relevant for the future.

While we rejoice at the transforming vision proposed in the report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group, we are dismayed by the lack of place accorded to the Francophone constituency and its contribution to the identity of The United Church of Canada. This represents a major and inexplicable step backwards, specifically with respect to the 40th General Council and subsequent sessions of the General Council Executive.

Between 1970 and 2002, thanks to much more enlightened support within the United Church, Francophones saw an increase in their visibility and decision-making power regarding the development of strategies adapted to their unique context and reality. Hard work over time produced real fruit, including the creation of the Laurentien Presbytery (1985), the MiFWG

(Ministries in French Working Group), the Standing Committee for French Ministries (COPERMIF) and, finally, the Ministries in French Unit ((UMiF) in 2002. UMiF became operational in 2004 but was then dissolved in 2009—against the unanimous will of the Francophone constituency—to be replaced by a cluster within a large unit.

The proposals of the Comprehensive Review Task Group would reduce Francophone ministries to a volunteer network with no decision-making power, no budget, no staff and no visible, stable institutional base. At the same time, the new structure would eliminate, without offering a replacement, the only Francophone presbytery, i.e. the only existing francophone decision-making structure, with its forum for discussion, solid budget and public positions.

The creation of a decision-making francophone Network would affirm the fundamental commitment of The United Church of Canada to Ministries in French, as well as its willingness to once again give Francophones responsibility for affirming their identity, developing as a constituency, and upholding an unassimilated and therefore credible witness within our Church and society.

The constitution of a decision-making francophone Network is vital for the future, the credibility, the visibility and the witness of both The United Church of Canada as a whole and its Francophone constituency.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Consistoire Laurentien voted concurrence

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 19 SUPPORT FOR MINISTRIES IN FRENCH**

**Originating Body:** Consistoire Laurentien

**Financial implications if known:** None

**Staffing implications if known:** None

**Source of funding if known:** Chasing the Spirit

**The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council reiterate the goal of The United Church of Canada to proclaim its message to the large percentage of the Canadian population whose first or second language is French by implementing the following measures:**

- a) Allocating at least 10% of funding for the “Chasing the Spirit” program to the development of new ministries in French;**
- b) Ensuring that Francophones are represented when criteria and analysis tools are developed for the assessment of projects submitted to this program;**
- c) Ensuring that Francophones are represented on the body responsible for assessing projects and approving funding;**
- d) Providing funding for the translation and production of resources for new ministries in French as well as for the contextual training of leaders for ministries in French and bilingual settings;**
- e) Ensuring that some of the staff and volunteers responsible for sharing resources and stimulating spiritual renewal have the linguistic and cultural skills required to perform their duties in a Francophone or bilingual setting.**

### **Background:**

The United Church is a national institution serving the entire territory of Canada. As a national church, it needs to serve the large percentage of the population whose primary spoken language is French, whether as their mother tongue or a second language.

In 2009, the 40th General Council voted to create five new positions for ministries in French, two of which now exist. Creation of the three other positions approved in 2009 requires a specific source of funding.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Consistoire Laurentien voted concurrence.

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **NL 1 A NEW MODEL**

**Origin:** Kathy Brett & Brian Colbourne, Newfoundland/Labrador Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** To be determined by Conference Executive

**Staffing Implications if known:** Consultation with four staff

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Newfoundland and Labrador Conference request that:**

- 1. The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council permit the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference to pursue the implementation of a new model, and that a task group be put in place to study and determine the model which would best fit our conference needs based on financial and human resources presently available.**
- 2. That if the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council approves the Comprehensive Review Proposals that the Newfoundland/Labrador Conference be a pilot.**
- 3. That if the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council does not approve the Comprehensive Review Proposals that the Newfoundland/Labrador Conference put a task group in place to study and determine a model for the Conference that can be funded within the means of the Conference.**

### **Background:**

Considering the present and future financial limitations, the new model would be better stewardship to streamline the existing model for Conference and District.

**Timing:** At the rise of General Council

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**Action:** the Conference agreed with proposal and that it be forward it to the 42th General Council

**Motion:** That the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference agreed with the proposal which came with point one and added the following changes:

- 1. That if the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council approves the Comprehensive Review Proposals that the NL Conference be a pilot.**
- 2. That if the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council does not approve the Comprehensive Review Proposals that the NL Conference put a task group in place to study and determine a model for the Conference that can be funded within the means of the Conference.**

### **NL 3 TASK GROUP TO ESTABLISH REGIONAL COUNCIL BOUNDARIES**

**Origin:** Russell Small

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** General Council Staff responsible for Regions and representatives from Conferences.

**Newfoundland and Labrador Conference proposes that:**

**That the 42nd General Council set up a task group that would establish the boundaries of the Regional Councils so the 43rd General Council will be able to make informed decisions regarding the same.**

**Intermediate Court Action:**

The Newfoundland and Labrador Conference agreed with proposal and forward it to the 42nd General Council

## **SK 2 TRAINING AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

**Originating Body:** Chinook Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not Applicable

**The Chinook Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42 General Council (2015):**

- **approve the Accountability of Ministry Personnel to The United Church of Canada be to The General Council of the United Church through a Training and Accountability Section within the Permanent Committee on Ministry Employment Policy and Services. (not through an “arms-length” College of Ministers and not requiring renewals of membership)**
- **as to Governance, this Training and Accountability Section would be overseen by a 20-member Board, with the composition of the board set by denominational policy to include:**
  - **equal number of: (1) ministers whether ordained, diaconal, or designated lay ministers and (2) lay people;**
  - **ensuring representation of each of ordained, diaconal, and designated lay ministers;**
  - **ensuring representation of Aboriginal ministries;**
  - **election of lay persons on a regional basis; and**
  - **election of ministry representatives by their peers on a regional basis.**

**The Training and Accountability Section would have the following three committees, composed of members of the Board, with each committee to include at least one minister and one layperson:**

- **Admission and Standards Committee: to assess (1) candidates for ordination or commissioning, {and designated lay ministers, unless they are to remain regionally accountable as is current} (2) ministers seeking admission from other denominations; and (3) UCC ministers seeking readmission.**
- **Complaints Committee: to assess complaints about ministry personnel, order investigations, order a formal hearing, and determine other appropriate outcomes. Complaints about effectiveness in ministry would continue to require 10 signatures from the ministry unit where the clergy serve; and**
- **Hearings Committee: to hold formal hearings of complaints and determine appropriate outcomes. Only the Hearings Committee has authority to place a minister’s name on the Discontinued Service List (Disciplinary).**

- **as to Authority and Responsibilities:**
  - **the Training and Accountability Section would maintain an up-to-date list of Ordained, Commissioned and Designated United Church ministry personnel and ministers from other denominations who have been approved to enter the admissions process,**
  - **Congregations and other communities of faith would only be permitted to call, appoint, or hire people who are on this list or United Church ministry students approved for internships and supply positions. All calls and appointments must be reported to this Training and Accountability Section so that an accurate list of ministry personnel in active service can be maintained.**
  - **all people in paid ministry in The United Church of Canada would be accountable through this Section, including ministry students and candidates for admission who are taking courses towards being credentialed in The United Church of Canada.**
  - **the Section would have authority and responsibility for:**
    - (1) **the assessment of candidates, ministers seeking admission from other denominations, and ministers seeking readmission to ministry in the United Church; and**
    - (2) **the oversight and discipline of ministry personnel and all those described in (1) above, according to policies and standards set by the General Council [or denominational council].**
  - **the Conference [or “regional council,” if approved through the United Church’s legislative process] would remain responsible for the ordination and commissioning of members of the order of ministry and recognition of designated lay ministers.**
  
- **authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the establishment of a Training and Accountability Section as set out above.**

### **Background:**

In continuity with almost all other Christian denominations’ theology of ministry, and with our own denominational theology and practice, Ordination to the Ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care continues to be understood as a lifetime vocation, suspended only by disciplinary action of the denomination or intentional resignation by a minister.

In continuity with most other Christian denominations’ theology of ministry, and with our own denominational theology and practice, Commissioning to the Diaconal Ministry continues to be understood as a lifetime vocation, suspended only by disciplinary action of the denomination or intentional resignation by a minister.

People who are trained and affirmed as Designated Lay Ministers, unless they are to remain accountable to regional bodies (current or revised) take on the mantle of clergy and are placed in

the same position of trust and authority as the other orders of ministry, should be subject to, and beneficiaries of, the same governance as the other orders of ministry.

There is a need to streamline our United Church of Canada decision-making model.

Theology of ministry is important and needs to be in continuity with Reform Protestant churches with whom we are most closely associated. Within this theology, ministry personnel need to be trained by, supported by, and responsible to the whole church and not to a vocational association. The Church cannot abdicate its responsibility to clergy to a vocational association. Even if this were not our theology of ministry, there are not enough members of United Church clergy to make a “College of Ministers” an effective body.

Having all files of ministry personnel: where they are serving, pensions, group insurance etc handled through one division should be helpful to all.

(An Alternative to that proposed by the Comprehensive Review Final Report because it represents a major and unacceptable change in theology of ministry)

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference



## **SK 6 OVERSIGHT OF “COMMUNITIES OF FAITH” UNDER THE PROPOSED THREE-COURT MODEL**

**Originating Body:** Chinook Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The Chinook Presbytery proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- **Adopt a new model which has explicit, required provisions for oversight of communities of faith by their governing court, perhaps including, but not limited to, the following:**
  - **Under the proposed three-court model of The United Church of Canada, each community of faith holding a covenant with a Regional Council of the United Church must be subject to inspection by the same;**
  - **One or more representative(s) of the Regional Council of the United Church be recommended to attend a worship service at each community of faith with which that Regional Council of the United Church holds a covenant, at least once per year, as part of the audit of a community of faith’s self-assessment;**
- **The result of the audit of worship of a community of faith is that the Regional Council of the United Church may impose special or additional requirements on that community of faith in order for the community of faith to maintain its covenant with the Regional Council of the United Church;**
- **One or more representative(s) of the Regional Council of the United Church be recommended to attend a meeting of the governing body of each community of faith with which that Regional Council of the United Church holds a covenant, at least once per year;**
- **Changes in pastoral relations between a community of faith and their current or proposed ministry personnel must have the consent of the Regional Council of the United Church;**
- **The Denominational Council have a set of unifying requirements for all covenants between a community of faith and the Regional Council of the United Church, which may include certain points mentioned above, and which must include guidelines for a community of faith’s self-assessment;**

- **The new model has explicit provisions outlining when the Regional Council has the authority to “step in” to manage a community of faith.**

**Background:**

The theological and doctrinal consistency of United Church congregations across Canada is fundamental to our identity as The United Church of Canada.

To claim the title of a congregation or community of faith of The United Church of Canada requires that said congregation uphold the policies and doctrines of The United Church of Canada.

The proposed three-court model requires all communities of faith of the United Church to maintain a covenant with a Regional Council of the United Church. Maintaining an honest, truthful, and open covenant requires regular contact and clear obligations between both parties.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Transmitted without Concurrence

**SK 7 STRENGTHENING THE REGIONAL COUNCILS – AN ALTERNATIVE TO AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY AS DESCRIBED IN COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW PROPOSALS, “A THREE-COUNCIL MODEL” AND “FUNDING A NEW MODEL”**

**Originating Body:** Wascana Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** Unknown at this time

**Staffing Implications:** Unknown at this time

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The Wascana Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- **approve in principle the Three-Council Structure subject to the following:**
  - 1) **boundaries for the Regional Councils be concurrent with the present Conference boundaries *until the rise of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council.***
  - 2) **decisions on the precise membership, authority and responsibilities of the Regional Councils and Denominational Council be determined at the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council, following rationalization to be done within Regional Councils and the Denominational Council in the interim period.**

**Issues to be addressed during the 3 year period of rationalization:**

- **Effective and efficient oversight of all of the ministry and mission being carried out in the name of The United Church of Canada in each region/conference, including the formal and informal governance structures needed for each region.**
- **Deciding upon what formula will be used to determine assessments throughout the church, including consideration of the differing types of ministries and communities of faith.**
- **Staffing needs for each region (to be determined by the region and to carry out their ministries under the oversight of each region).**
- **Effective and efficient functioning of the Denominational Council as it carries out its essential responsibilities of setting policies necessary to unite the whole United Church (property, pastoral relations, pensions and benefits, theology, global partnerships, public witness) and technical services such as information technology, payroll, accounting; and the election and support of the Moderator.**
- **Determining the structures for effective, accessible, representative decision-making Councils for each region and for the denomination as a whole. Communities of faith should not pay for representatives to**

**Council meetings. Very large bodies cannot do real participatory decision making.**

- **Regional responsibility for nurturing the identity of the United Church and discerning and expressing public witness in each region.**
  - **How the United Church will promote mission, including justice-seeking throughout the church**
  - **Addressing in concrete ways the possible growth of financial inequity in the regions.**
- 3) **the following principles guide the budgeting process for The United Church of Canada:**
- **Spend only what is received, which will require at least an \$11 million reduction in spending by 2018 from current 2015 spending levels.**
  - **Use the Mission and Service Fund to fund only mission activities such as grants to partners; overseas personnel; mission support grants within Canada; investing in new ministries; supporting renewal within the continuing communities of faith; providing theological education for ministry personnel and laity.**
  - **Mission and Service funds will not be spent on staff salaries in the Denominational Council or the Regional Councils after 2018.**
  - **All staff work carried out by staff of the Denominational Council and the Regional Councils will be defined as ministry. This ministry work would be funded by sharing assessments gathered from communities of faith by the Regional Councils. Each Regional Council will keep 85% of the assessments and will give 15% of the assessments to the Denominational Council.**
- **The Denominational Council will make decisions regarding the use of the Mission & Service Fund until such time as the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council makes further decisions.**
  - **Aboriginal funding needs to be continued – in the interim it will continue to come from the General Council budget and after 2018 would come from assessments.**
  - **Regional differences require differing approaches to organization and governance.**
  - **Staff and human resources are most effective and efficient when they are closest to the active ministries and communities of faith – the core of the United Church.**

**Background:**

Assumptions guiding this proposal:

1. Need for change exists because of declining membership and insufficient resources, both of which may have resulted from perceived failure to remain relevant and adapt to cultural shifts.
2. Structural change without addressing the issue of relevance and adaptation may have only short-term benefits.
3. To do nothing is not an option.
4. Regional differences require differing approaches.
5. Dealing with each proposal put forward by the CRTG in detail may be counter-productive, therefore, we should concentrate on major issues.
6. An important part of the identity of The United Church of Canada is being conciliar.

“Conciliar” means:

- Each Council is made up of members of other Councils
- Shared responsibilities for finances and functions. Each Council has the authority to raise finances and make decisions about the use of its financial resources.

Currently 86 Presbyteries and 13 Conferences fund their work through assessments of congregations. It has been proposed by the Comprehensive Review Task Group that in the future those assessments would be divided, with the successors to those 99 bodies receiving 50% and 1 Denominational Council receiving the other 50%. Plus the Mission and Service Fund would continue to be collected and used by decisions of the Denominational Council. Other sources of funding, such as retail sales, bequests and investments would still be available to the Denominational Council. This is a significant centralization of financial resources and the power that goes with them.

As the Denominational Council rationalizes how to do its work with the funds available to it, it will be able to negotiate with regions about where to most effectively place the program staff for leadership in ministry and mission from the current General Council Office, thus placing them closer to the communities of faith. Development of resources can efficiently be shared amongst regions, given the technological advances in resource production and electronic communication.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

## **ANW 14 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW, *UNITED IN GOD'S WORK*: REPRESENTATION OF THE UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church Women

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of attending meetings

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council Ensure that, in the Three-Council Model proposed by *United in God's Work*, provision is made for the full voting participation of the representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women (UCW) in The United Church of Canada's current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

In 1960 in Edmonton, the United Church General Council approved the uniting of the Woman's Association (WA) and Woman's Missionary Society (WMS) to form a new organization for the women to "share in a much more meaningful way in the work of the church within the Congregation, Presbytery, Conference and in various boards of the church under the General Council." (Ordinary Heroes – Celebrating United Church Women, 2012, page 21)

The proposals from *United in God's Work* offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that the (UCW) play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

The United Church Women have traditionally supported their congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW, many congregations would cease to exist long ago. It should also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service (M&S) Fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was donated to M&S by the UCW throughout Canada.

Including a representative of the (UCW) as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and work of the UCW to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by the Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church Women to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

## **ANW 7 MEMBERSHIP OF THE UCW IN THE GENERAL COUNCIL**

**Origin: St. Paul Presbytery**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) appoint a representative from the national United Church Woman as a voting member on the General Council Executive, and subsequently, to the Denominational Council Executive.**

### **Background:**

The United Church Women have, historically and currently, provided significant contribution to the life of The United Church of Canada.

The United Church Women have, historically and currently, provided significant financial contribution to The United Church of Canada.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.



## **BQ 6 FULL VOTING STATUS BE GRANTED TO THE NATIONAL UNITED CHURCH WOMEN PRESIDENT**

**Origin:** Bay of Quinte Conference United Church Women

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** Already funded by General Council

**The Bay of Quinte Conference United Church Women proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Grant full voting privileges of the General Council Executive to the NUCW President effective with the approval of this proposal at the 42nd General Council (2015).**

**This proposal is to be directed to the General Council Executive for action and may be referred to the appropriate committee for permanent action.**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The UCW was formed in 1962 and at its inception was the largest adult organization within the church. Membership is declining, much as church membership is declining but the UCW is still a significant presence in the church.

In 2013, our National President attended the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women area meeting in Chicago. She also was present at two General Council meetings during which the Comprehensive Review Task Group was named; the 2013 budget was discussed and approved; met with members of the Ghana Calvary Methodist United Church congregation during which an agreement was signed establishing an association between our two denominations. The executive supported the call of the Native Women's Assembly of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations for the Government of Canada to strike a national inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls. In August she attended the World Federation of Methodist and United Church Women's League national meeting in Regina.

The NUCW has taken up a five-year commitment to fight child poverty in Canada. "We are looking to serve as an advocate for children and youth. Who better than the UCW to intentionally look at child poverty in our local communities, our Conference and beyond!" says our new National President, Phyllis Buchner.

Statistics provided show that the UCW has raised \$129 million for the Mission and Service Fund in its 52 years of activity. An organization capable of this commitment and dedication to our church and our Mission & Service is entitled to have our National President as a full voting member of the General Council Executive.

As our 50th Anniversary Initiative in 2012, the UCW raised \$268,000. nationally, for the Morogoro Training Centre in Tanzania to train mid-wives in maternal health in the region. Our goal had been \$50,000. Each course costs \$15,000. and the cost per participant is \$425. As of September 2013, seven (7) courses had been held. The Training Centre has determined that it is more efficient to travel to where the women are, than to have them come to the Training Centre. By the end of 2014, our donations will have trained 500 women in the region and have

contributed to improved maternal health immensely.

We are an organization 35,000 strong that provides opportunities for Christian Witness, Study, Fellowship and Service for the total mission of our Church.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Bay of Conference carried this proposal.

## **HAM 4 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD'S WORK REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin: Waterloo U.C.W. Presbyterial**

**Financial Implications if known: Cost of Meeting Participation**

**Staffing Implications if known: None**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Waterloo U.C.W. Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God's Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada's current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God's Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that with-out the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada. Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence

## **HAM 6 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD'S WORK REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin: Halton U.C.W. Presbyterial**

**Financial Implications if known: Cost of Meeting Participation**

**Staffing Implications if known: None**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Halton U.C.W. Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God's Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada's current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God's Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that with-out the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone; \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

### **Intermediate Court Action: (from the April 28/15 Halton Presbytery Full Court meeting)**

**MOTION:** Amy Hill/Mary Patterson

That Halton Presbytery support the proposal from Halton Presbyterial U.C.W. that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God's Work,

provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

**CARRIED** (3 abstentions)

This proposal will be transmitted to Hamilton Conference with concurrence.

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence

## **LON 6 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Algoma United Church Women Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Algoma United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Communities of Faith, Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Algoma Presbytery agreed with this proposal April 25, 26, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 7 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**ORIGINATING BODY:** Elgin United Church Women Presbyterial

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:** None

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

**Elgin United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) Ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Elgin Presbytery agreed with this proposal April 21, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 8 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Essex United Church Women Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Essex United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

The Essex U.C.W. Presbyterial Executive approved this proposal on Tuesday, April 28, 2015. Transmit with concurrence. Essex Presbytery, Tuesday May 19, 2015.

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015



## **LON 9 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Huron-Perth United Church Women Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Huron-Perth United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Transmit with concurrence April 28, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 10 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Kent Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kent Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 11 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Lambton United Church Women Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Lambton United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives, as well on the governing body of local communities of faith.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives, as well on the governing body of local communities of faith.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Transmit with concurrence May 21, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 12 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin: Middlesex United Church Women Presbyterial**

**Financial Implications if known: Cost of Meeting Participation**

**Staffing Implications if known: None**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Middlesex United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Moved and seconded that Middlesex Presbytery endorses the proposal made by the Middlesex Presbytery United Church Women Presbyterial, as circulated. Carried

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

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## **LON 13 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Oxford United Church Women Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Oxford United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Transmit with concurrence on May 13, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

**MAR 8 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD’S WORK  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Sydney Presbytery / UCW Presbyterial

**Financial Implications:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Sydney Presbytery / UCW Presbyterial proposes that:**

**That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women (UCW) in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member, while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that the UCW play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

UCW have traditionally supported their local congregations, fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW, many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident, as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the UCW as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of UCW to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network and the governing structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett / Sean Handcock moved that the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #16 entitled “Comprehensive Review: United in God’s Work Representation of United Church Women on Councils” to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **MNWO 4 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW –REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Originating Body: Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario**

**Financial Implications if known: Cost of Meeting Participation**

**Staffing Implications if known: None**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) provide for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives in the Three Council Model proposed by the Comprehensive Review Task Group document “United in God’s Work.”**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that with-out the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the UCW to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

## **M&O 7 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD'S WORK REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Originating Body:** Montreal and Ottawa Conference UCW

**Financial Implications:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** n/a

**Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council ensure that:**

- 1) in the three Council model proposed by United in God's Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives; and**
- 2) the United Church Women's participation be part of the stated goal of diversity in the makeup of Regional and Denominational Councils and Executives.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada's current structure is not consistent. Currently some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God's Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the United Church Women is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of Mission and Service is evident as in 2014 \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by United Church Women across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the leadership of the UCW to enhance and strengthen the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.



**MTU 4 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD’S WORK –  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin: Manitou Conference UCW**

**Financial Implications if known: nil**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Manitou Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council ensure that in the three court Council model proposed by “United in God’s Work,” provision be made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Intermediate Court Action:**

- transmitted with concurrence by North Bay Presbytery (May, 2015)
- transmitted with concurrence by Manitou Conference (May, 2015)

## **TOR 11 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD'S WORK REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Toronto Conference United Church Women (UCW)

**Financial Implications:** Cost of meeting participation

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Toronto Conference United Church Women proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council ensure that in the three-Council model proposed by United in God's Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the regional and denominational councils and their executives as well as the community of faith governing body.**

### **Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women (UCW) in The United Church of Canada's current structure is not consistent. Some presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God's Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the regional and denominational councils and their executives as well as the community of faith governing body.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service (M&S) fund is evident as in 2014 alone \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the UCW to inform and guide the councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

### **Intermediate Court Action**

Transmitted with non-concurrence by Toronto Conference.

## **MAR 10 COLLEGE OF MINISTERS**

**Origin: Maritime Conference**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Maritime Conference recommends to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council that the functions of the proposed College of Ministers be fulfilled by committees of the denominational and regional bodies.**

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett / Sean Handcock moved that the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #23 entitled “College of Ministers” to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

## **MNWO 2 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW – COLLEGE OF MINISTERS**

**Originating Body: Agassiz Presbytery**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) Postpone definitely the proposal “Comprehensive Review: A College of Ministers” for the establishment of the College of Ministers until the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council in 2017 allowing time for ministers, ministries, regional courts, councils or bodies to consider financial and ministry implications.**

### **Background:**

The College of Ministers is to be the path of accreditation, assessment and qualification of ministers; and it is unclear if a national or regional college would be more effective.

The proposed College of Ministers does not include those retired and retained on the roll of Presbytery and those retired and retained have served and continue to serve the church in various ministry capacities.

The church is also considering competencies for accreditation, education of candidates and ministry membership.

The proposed budget of \$750,000 in the original document does not seem adequate for the work proposed

The church is proposing changes to structures, boundaries and courts of the church at the same time.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted without concurrence. The Court decided to transmit all proposals related to the Comprehensive Review.***

## **M&O 14 PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE COLLEGE OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** Rev. Nancy Colton, Presbyter, Ottawa Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** none

**Staffing Implications if known:** none

**Source of Funding if known:** none

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council (2015) amend the Proposal entitled “A College Of Ministers” by removing the name “College of Ministers” and replacing it with the name “Board of Ministry Personnel: Accreditation, Accountability, and Discipline.”**

### **Background:**

The word “college” when used in this and similar contexts becomes a term with a very specific, legal understanding. “Colleges” are regulated by provincial and/or federal government legislation because they do very particular kinds of things in terms of regulation etc. However, ministers are not registered professionals in the way doctors, nurses etc. are so it will be confusing, misleading, and potentially attract undue (and unwelcome) attention to call this board a college.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

This proposal was supported by Ottawa Presbytery.

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 15 A PROPOSAL TO ALLOW FOR A LARGER BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE COLLEGE OF MINISTERS IN ORDER TO CREATE A MORE DIVERSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Origin:** Barbara Reynolds, Presbyter, Ottawa Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council (2015): amend the proposal “A College of Ministers” by adding the following text as a bullet point to Section C. Governance:**

- a) **That the Denominational Council have the power to increase the size of the Board of Directors, if necessary, to manage the workload and/or to ensure the representation of the broad diversity of voices, communities and regions, including Francophone and ethnic voices, within The United Church of Canada;**
- b) **That the Board of Directors be a body made up of equal numbers of clergy and lay persons to be appointed by the Denominational Council on the basis of names submitted by the regional councils, or other appropriate designated bodies;**
- c) **That the discernment processes ensure selection of qualified people for the board.**

### **Background:**

Diversity is a hallmark of The United Church of Canada. Thus, it is essential that our structures reflect in the broadest possible way this diversity and richness.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

This Proposal was strongly supported by Ottawa Presbytery. Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 16 NATIONAL LISTING OF THOSE DESIGNATED FOR INTERIM MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF SUPERVISION**

**Originating Body:** Montreal Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** minimal

**Staffing Implications:** existing GC Office staff, and yet another administrative detail for the Conference Personnel Officer

**Source of Funding:** Budgets of General Council Human Resource Unit and Conferences

**The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council direct, through its Executive, that the College of Ministers maintain a list of those designated by United Church Conferences (or future regional equivalents) as Interim Ministers, and of those who are trained for the Ministry of Supervision, and make those lists available to those who seek these resources.**

### **Background:**

Ministers who have been trained and designated for Interim Ministry, Transitional Ministry, and the Ministry of Supervision are important resources needed throughout the church. Centralized lists available through the GC Human Resource Unit would allow mission units to simply access those who have such training and designation, and begin the process of discerning ‘a good fit’ for their ministry needs.

While the Conference (or its future regional equivalent) is the appropriate body to evaluate the credentials of those within their bounds who have received such training for Interim Ministry, Transitional Ministry and the Ministry of Supervision such designation should be accepted, or at least easily transferred, across The United Church of Canada. Those who are so designated should be able to cross administrative boundaries easily, without the encumbrances of regional designation. Those who seek such ministry personnel should be able to do so as broadly as possible.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Montreal Presbytery voted concurrence.

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

### **SK 3 AMENDMENT TO THE CRTG PROPOSALS – COLLEGE OF MINISTERS AND ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Originating Body:** Wascana Presbytery

**Financial implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The Wascana Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) receive and postpone definitely the Proposals regarding the College of Ministers and the Association of Ministers until rationalization of the Denominational and Regional Councils has been completed.**

**Background:**

This very complex decision needs to be balanced with knowledge of the shape and functions that form the structure of the new Three Council system. Therefore it can be addressed after the rationalization of the structures, functions and finances of the Councils have been determined.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference



## **SK 4 COLLEGE OF MINISTERS AND ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Originating body:** Good Spirit Presbytery

**Financial implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The Good Spirit Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) develop and implement the Proposals regarding the College of Ministers and the Association of Ministers simultaneously.**

### **Background:**

The College of Ministers will provide the accreditation, oversight and discipline of ministers with the Association of Ministers providing the peer support and collegiality of ministers. Presbytery has been the court that provided the connection and hopefully support and collegiality to ministers. In the proposed 3 Council structure, the regional council will not provide the same peer support and collegiality and therefore the Association must be formed to provide this at the same time that the College is being formed to provide for discipline and oversight.

Intermediate Court Action: Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

## **SK 5 SUPPORT, ASSESSMENT, OVERSIGHT AND DISCIPLINE OF APPLICANTS FOR DESIGNATED LAY MINISTRY**

**Originating Body:** Tamarack Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of funding:** Not applicable

**The Tamarack Presbytery proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- 1. approve the inclusion of applicants for Designated Lay Ministry as members in the proposed College of Ministers in order that they might receive the assessment, oversight and discipline of the College and that they might be eligible for appointment to ministry positions with Communities of Faith,**
- 2. direct the proposed Regional Councils to provide support for applicants for Designated Lay Ministry during discernment, to provide support for applicants and for the Communities of Faith where they are appointed to ministry positions during the educational process, and to implement a process for sharing recommendations about the applicants' fitness and readiness for ministry, and,**
- 3. direct the General Secretary to ensure that applicants for Designated Lay Ministry are included in appropriate clauses in Remits and other documents that establish Regional Councils and the College of Ministers.**

### **Background:**

As The United Church of Canada moves towards implementing the recommendations included in *United in God's Way*, the intention is clear to continue to include Designated Lay Ministers as ministry personnel in The United Church of Canada and to include them as members of the College of Ministers. The proposal for A Three Council Model gives authority and responsibility for recognizing Designated Lay Ministers. The proposal for A College of Ministers says, "Membership in the College would be mandatory for all members of the order of ministry and Designated Lay Ministers serving in paid accountable ministry in congregations and other communities of faith."

*The Manual 2013* and earlier editions of that document do not and did not include a description of the processes of discernment, supervision and receiving Designated Lay Ministers, with details of this work being included in the *Designated Lay Ministry Handbook*. But as The United Church of Canada implements the proposed Regional Councils and the proposed College of Ministers we need to ensure that applicants for Designated Lay Ministry would be eligible for appointment to ministry positions with Communities of Faith. In order for them to be eligible for appointment to ministry positions, applicants for Designated Lay Ministry could be named as student members of the College. Naming applicants for Designated Lay Ministry as student members of the College would also ensure that the proposed College of Ministers would have

authority and responsibility for the assessment, oversight and discipline of Designated Lay Ministers while they are completing their educational program, while serving in supervised ministry appointments.

In addition we need to ensure that the proposed Regional Councils will be able to take responsibility for providing support during the discernment process and while applicants complete their preparation for ministry while appointed to ministry positions within Communities of Faith. That might be accomplished through appointing persons similar to those in place for candidates for ordained and diaconal ministries. Those persons could also provide necessary support to the Communities of Faith where the applicants are serving in ministry during their preparation of ministry, while also providing recommendations to the College of Ministers about the applicants' fitness and readiness for ministry.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

## **LON 15 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” COLLEGE OF MINISTERS AND ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** Glenwood United Church

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown but expectations of more transparency and input

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unknown at this time

**Source of Funding if known:** Assessment protocol

**The Official Board of Glenwood United Church proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Pending approval of the establishment of a College of Ministers as Recommended,**

- A. Concurrently establish the Association of Ministers for the mutual support and collegiality of all Ministry Personnel both active and retired.**
- B. Pay the cost associated with establishing this Association through a ministry development fund which would serve as ‘seed’ money until such time the Association of Ministers is self-funding (within 3-5 years)**

### **Background:**

When the College of Ministers is established to accredit persons to become ministers, uphold the standards set for ministers by the denomination and oversee and discipline ministers it is imperative that the Association of Ministers be established at the same time.

This is imperative for active and retired Ministry Personnel who are experiencing substantial stress through the many challenges and changes within our United Church of Canada. This Association will need to be established and have a mandate which is varied based upon immediate and short term and long term goals of all ministry personnel.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Official Board, Glenwood United Church, April 27, 2015.

Transmit with concurrence. Essex Presbytery, Tuesday May 19, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 16 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** Huron-Perth Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** General Council to allocate funds/resources for the work of designing and launching and thereafter funded by members

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unknown. Association to be national in scope with elections from regions

**Source of Funding if known:** General Council to allocate resources to support the design group in this work. Membership funded once organized

### **The Huron-Perth Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) strike a working group of ministers to design and present a feasible model for an Association of Ministers; to be launched in concert with the College of Ministers; to address the social, spiritual and legal needs of ministers.**

### **Background:**

In our current structure, presbyteries and districts are meant to provide collegiality and support to ministers as well as oversee and discipline ministers. Ministers may also find support in informal networks they build themselves. In the proposed structure the College of Ministers will make ministers ready for ministry and ensure they stay ready, by implementing standards and exams and performing oversight and discipline.

Therefore no structure will be available for ministers to benefit from collegiality and support unless an Association of Ministers is designed and implemented in concert with the College of Ministers.. With many churches closing and more to come in the future, ministers find themselves isolated by distance and resources.

There must not be a lapse in the support of ministers. Therefore Huron Perth Presbytery recommends that a working group of ministers design, not explore, a feasible model for an association of ministers to be launched in concert with the College of Ministers. The function of an association will address the social, legal, and spiritual needs of ministers.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

**NL 2 NON-SUPPORT FOR RECOMMENDATION #5 IN THE “UNITED IN GOD WORK” REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT AN ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** Guy Mathews, <sup>Gower</sup> Street United Church

**Financial Implications if known:** Nil

**Staffing Implications if known:** Nil

**Source of Funding if known:** Nil

**Newfoundland and Labrador Conference proposes that:**

- 1. The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council and the church in general, not impede or discourage, in any way, the formation of an Association of Ministers.**
- 2. The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council not become directly involved in the process of the possible establishing of an Association of Ministers by either organizing, facilitating, advising or the making available of Financial and/or personnel resources.**

**Background**

Concern has been expressed by Ministry Personnel that there are perceived injustices that exist in the processes and policies of the church in matters of oversight discipline, review and Pastoral Relationships. In recognition of this concern a proposal is being made to establish a College of Ministers.

It is not understood to be normal practice for an employer, in this case the church, to be actively involved in an Association of Employees, in this case the ministers.

There may also be possible conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in the church being actively participating in such a process.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

The Newfoundland and Labrador Conference agreed with proposal and forward it to the 42 General Council

## **ANW 11 FUNDING MODEL (1) – COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW #6**

**Origin:** Foothills Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Foothills Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015:**

- 1. Utilize a funding model that distributes funds collected by assessments based on an understanding that the majority of ministry is lived out within Communities of Faith, and that these ministries are most effectively supported on a regional basis; and**
- 2. Direct that a 10% tithe of the assessments support those regions that are less financially viable.**

### **Background:**

The proposed Three-Council Model takes many functions currently carried out at the Presbytery or Conference levels, and either centralizes them at a National level, or empowers Communities of Faith to carry out the functions.

This proposal asserts that Communities of Faith will be best supported in their work if the support is offered regionally, rather than nationally. One specific area of concern is the decision-making mechanism about which new ministries are to be funded through "Chasing the Spirit." If these ministries are to be adequately supported at a local/regional level, the initial funding decisions must involve significant regional input rather than relying solely on a more distant, national approach.

Regarding the 10% tithe, the *United in God's Work* Report, p.33, outlines the funding challenges currently faced by some Conferences. These challenges will be very apparent with the increase in assessments. A tithe is proposed as a way to ease the pressure on those geographic areas of the denomination that are less financially viable.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Foothills Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference. Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

## **ANW 12 FUNDING MODEL (2) – (COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW #6)**

**Origin:** Foothills Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Foothills Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015 commit to a funding model in which travel and other meeting-related costs are borne by the event, rather than expecting Communities of Faith and/or attendees to bear these costs over and above moneys submitted by assessments.**

### **Background:**

In the proposed model, each Community of Faith will have the ability to send two delegates to the Denominational Council, one order of ministry plus one lay. “*Backgrounder #10: Finances*” estimates that there could be roughly 2,630 Communities of Faith in 2018; these will be tremendously diverse, ranging from large, financially solvent communities to tiny, financially struggling communities; some will be within walking distance of the meeting site, some will be far away from the meeting site. If the Denominational Council is held regularly at the same central location, as suggested by “*Backgrounder #5: A Three-Council Model*”, some Communities of Faith will always be close to the site and others will always be far away.

There is a danger that smaller, financially struggling, and/or more distant Communities of Faith will either (a) offload expenses to the delegates themselves or (b) refrain from sending delegates, simply due to the costs. It is imperative that the Denominational Council set up a mechanism to equalize the expenses - a "travel pool" or similar system.

The Comprehensive Review's "*Backgrounder #5, A Three-Council Model*" states that, "Travel, accommodation, and registration costs [of the Denominational Council] would be paid by Communities of Faith, with bursaries available where needed", and, "The average cost for all commissioners would be calculated and charged as a standard registration fee to ensure costs for all Communities of Faith are equitable." The proposal from Foothills Presbytery affirms the critical importance of this equitable sharing of meeting costs. While the example cited is the Denominational Council, the same principle of equity needs to be in place for Regional Councils (and other gatherings) as well, to ensure that all communities of faith have an equal ability to participate in the broader life of the denomination.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Foothills Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.



## **ANW 16 DENOMINATIONAL FUNDING**

**Origin:** St. Thomas United Church, Calgary Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**St. Thomas United Church proposes that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council:**

- 1. Fund governance and support service (administration) by assessing communities of faith;**
- 2. Limit any assessment imposed on faith communities to support and fund denominational infrastructure, such as a Denominational Council;**
- 3. Set the maximum assessment to be not more than 4% of column 40 in Volume I Statistics of the Yearbook & Directory for 9 years;**
- 4. Calculate any assessment to communities of faith based on the average of the most recent three years of data published in Volume I Statistics of the Yearbook & Directory;**
- 5. Set the assessment amount for communities of faith once every three years;**
- 6. Spend only what is received through the assessment process;**
- 7. Determine the number of national staff and the focus of their ministry based on missional priorities of the denomination and the revenues received;**
- 8. Use the Mission and Service Fund to fund only ministry and mission activities, including Aboriginal Ministries;**
- 9. Share assessments equitably (50/50) between any national body and all regional bodies; and**
- 10. Develop a formula for the sharing of assessment between all regional bodies that demonstrates a commitment to the fair and equitable distribution of wealth.**

### **Background:**

In the document, *United for God's Work*, the Comprehensive Review Task Group recommends that denominational infrastructure be funded through the assessment of administrative costs to faith communities. In effect, this would segregate the Mission & Service Fund so that, in theory, there is increased transparency between denominational funding on the one hand, and program (mission and ministry) funding on the other.

Recommendation #6: Funding a New Model, states as outcomes that:

- a) The church (meaning the denomination) spends only what it receives.
- b) The number and function of staff depend on the revenues received.
- c) The Mission and Service Fund be used only for ministry and mission activities. (With the notable exception of Aboriginal Ministries.)
- d) Governance and support services (administration) at the regional and denominational levels be funded by assessing communities of faith.
- e) The sharing of all resources, wealth, and abundance be encouraged across the church.

However, there is no recommendation to suggest how the denominational infrastructures will have their revenues defined and thus be able to spend only what it receives. In other words, there is no provision that imposes a realistic limit on the amount that can be assessed by a denominational body for the purposes of governance and support services (administration).

For St. Thomas United Church, the 4.75% of column 40 (based on 2013 statistics) would mean an increase in the operating budget of \$18,830, with no guarantee that the assessment would stay at the 4.75% level. Additionally, this figure does not include any additional assessment, beyond the current assessment, levied by any regional body that St. Thomas United will belong to as a community of faith in a covenantal relationship. Having the denominational assessment locked in for a three-year period would enable greater planning at the communities of faith level and predictably for annual budgeting.

With declining membership, it is time to link our structures directly to the capacity of what communities of faith can support in such a way that, as the denomination shrinks, so too must its infrastructure, and as the denomination grows, so too will its capacity to offer increased supports. In this way it is in the best interest of all levels of denominational infrastructure to support and encourage growth within communities of faith across the country. There is also the need to impose a hard ceiling on what can be assessed that is assured for communities of faith. In such a way the denominational structures will be required to live within its means.

In *United for God's Work* it is also acknowledged that, if there is a regional level, it will require financial resources to live out its rediscovered mission. To accomplish this, 50% of the denominational assessment will be divided equitably amongst the regional bodies, yet it is important that each region be treated fairly but not necessarily the same. The goal is to have regions offer the same level of basic support to communities of faith wherever they are located. By keeping with the tradition of the Apostles and early Christian communities of faith of holding all things in common and each taking according to their need, each region will receive enough resources to offer a minimum level of support. By necessity, this means that where regions have greater access to resources, they will receive less financial resources from the denomination, and where regions have less access, they will receive more. It also provides a mechanism for addressing geographical and contextual challenges faced with The United Church of Canada.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Thomas United Church, Calgary, to Calgary Presbytery.

Transmitted with concurrence by Calgary Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted without concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

### **BQ 3 CLARIFICATION OF THE PROPOSED NEW ASSESSMENT FORMULA ON PASTORAL CHARGES AND CHURCHES**

**Originating Body:** Upper Valley Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** Source of funding for the operating budget of a new denominational Council

**Staffing Implications:** Unknown

**Source of Funding:** Mission and Service

**The Upper Valley Presbytery proposes that:**

**the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to provide Commissioners with a detailed accounting of the financial impact of Recommendation Number 6 of the Final Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group on all congregations, along with the justification for setting a new assessment formula of 4.75 percent of column 40, the cost to run a community of faith.**

#### **Background**

Upper Valley Presbytery is composed of many rural churches that are struggling to stay afloat financially. For this year, many churches and Pastoral Charges are facing a substantial increase in their assessment by Presbytery, along with an increase in the Minister's housing allowance. Some assistance in covering higher Presbytery assessments was provided by the Presbytery, but many congregations and Charges have noted the difficulties they are now facing in meeting their additional expenses.

Some of the Pastoral Charges have calculated that the proposed 4.75 percent levy by a new denominational Council—as recommended in supporting documentation to the Final Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Force—would result in a noticeably higher assessment than the existing Presbytery assessment. It has been estimated in supporting documentation for the Final Report that the new formula would result in an average “one percent increase in the cost to run a congregation (column 40)”—as cited in “Backgrounder #10: Finances”. From our perspective, this seems to be low in the case of smaller churches. A 25 percent increase in an assessment may be “only” \$1,000, but that could easily be more than a one percent increase in a small church's cost to run a congregation. It appears, then, that in some cases the financial pressures could be greater for the smaller churches under the new recommendation.

Undoubtedly, for some churches the new assessment would have a greater financial impact than for others. We would appreciate Commissioners to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council knowing whether the proposed new assessment formula will be more of a burden for some churches and become the tipping point of whether they can continue to exist or are financially forced to close their doors. Members of the Upper Valley Presbytery therefore request clarification from the Executive of General Council about how this formula was arrived at and the extent to which some congregations will fare worse than others.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

A group of members of Presbytery discussed this question at its regular meeting on April 21, 2015. A motion was drafted (15P17), put to a vote and passed.

The Bay of Quinte Conference carried this proposal.

## **LON 18 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” FUNDING PROPOSAL FOR RESTRUCTURING OF UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

**Origin:** Lambton Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** That the same amount of money be allotted to support the restructuring of The United Church of Canada as is proposed in the final recommendations of the comprehensive review (Finances Section 10) but distributed differently.

**Staffing Implications if known:** Significantly fewer staff operating at the Denominational Council level. This proposal recommends dramatically reducing the staffing of the Denominational Council. We suggest that this part of the new structure contain the Renewal and New Ministry Development department and a very small, predominantly administrative body to do the remainder of the work

**Source of Funding if known:** The same as proposed by the Comprehensive Review Final Report

**Lambton Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) Reject the funding recommendation of the Comprehensive Review and replace it with the following. We recommend that the 31.9 million dollars proposed to be directed towards the Denominational Council be given to the Regional Council and that the 10.9 million designated for the Regional Councils be directed to the Denominational Council.**

**Background:**

In the proposed restructuring the majority of responsibilities will reside at the Regional Council level. It will be untenable to do this work with limited funds spread over wide geographic areas. We believe that staff and resources are of greatest benefit to communities of faith, and to the denomination as a whole, by being proximate. Having a cumbersome structure with many departments and numerous staff at the national level has been a complaint of many United Church members and clergy over many years. This realignment of funding would address these concerns.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **MAR 7 THE DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL STRUCTURE AND FUNDING REGARDING THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA REPORT “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”**

**Origin:** Halifax Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** The cost to the church as a whole is unchanged from the proposals contained in United in God's Work, but the distribution would shift, giving the Regional Councils 67% of the assessed funds and the Denominational Council 33%.

**Staffing Implications:** The Denominational Council staff would be decreased, and the staff of the Regional Councils increased.

**Halifax Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council direct that all current standing committees and working groups associated with the General Council office be dismantled and that the Denominational Council office be reconstituted with only those personnel and committees that are essential to our new structure, and that 33% of assessments be used to maintain the functions of the Denominational Council and 67% be used to maintain the functions of the Regional Councils.**

**Rationale:**

The United Church has always been a national church with strong regional identity. This proposal is born out of a belief that the spirit moves most freely when people gather within the groups who have the strongest relationships. People hold the strongest bonds with those in their faith community, and the next closest bonds would be with the people who live and work in the same region - people that they see from time to time in their church life. The national office is very distant from the faith communities that make up the backbone of our church.

Much of the work that furthers our ministry as individual churches or as a church happens regionally, or could happen within networks, and does not need to be driven by a national staff. The United Church is best served by a model that gives the greatest power to the congregations and ministry units first, and that works its way up to the regions second, rather than a model that is driven by policy and action flowing from the national church down.

It is the intent of this proposal to free resources from the national structure to be used by the regions for ministry, gathering, and staff support.

It is also the intent of this proposal to strengthen the connections of many faith communities to the denominational structure that is closest to them. This may help to close what often seems to be an increase in perceived distance between the congregation and the wider church.

**Implementation:**

The Denominational Council would be pared down to only that which is essential. Some structures that may be necessary include:

- The Moderator and the General Secretary and necessary support staff

- Small groups for
  - The Manual
  - Theology and Faith and Interchurch/Interfaith Relations
  - Finances
  - Minimum legal requirements for Pension and Benefits and appropriate support to Pension Plan members
  - Publications (these to be run at break-even or for-profit basis only)
- Support structure for the Triennial Denominational Council meeting
- Support structure for the Denomination Council Executive
- Support structure for global partnerships
- Support structure for Regional Relationships

In so far as possible, denominational tasks will be addressed either through assigning them to regions (e.g. archives) or in more active partnership (e.g. KAIROS or the ACT Alliance). Denomination-shaping tasks could be assigned to regionally-based work groups with provision of networking as necessary by the Denominational Council.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett / Sean Handcock moved that the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposals #13 entitled “The Denominational Council Structure and Funding Regarding the United Church of Canada report “United in God’s Work”” to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **M&O 6 OVERSIGHT OF COMMUNITIES OF FAITH**

**Origin:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**That Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes:**

**That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct that in the Three Council Model, Regional Councils:**

- 1) Create regional policies on the distribution of proceeds from the sale of property; and**
- 2) Oversee and approve the sale and the distribution of proceeds from the sale of property.**

### **Background:**

The buying and selling of property can be a difficult process for a community of faith. Errors in process do happen. Pastoral oversight would help to catch these errors, and to provide sober second thought which can be quite important when a community of faith is making a very significant decision. Such oversight is needed for the protection of United Church property.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.



## **M&O 11 FUNDING A NEW MODEL**

**Originating Body:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:** local ministry sites

**Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**that the 42nd General Council create a task group to define a precise assessment formula that is just and sustainable, and that recognises the differences in, and gives priority to the financial and spiritual health of communities of faith, individually and collectively.**

### **Background:**

There is support for the new model of funding work of the denominational council. There is concern about finding a formula that enables the transition from many current ways of determining assessment to a new national one.

The Comprehensive report suggests a formula based on line 40 of the year book which is based on expenditures. Other voices suggest that a revenue based formula would be more reflective of the resources of communities of faith. There is concern that increase in assessments not be larger than 25% in a transition time. Another idea that emerged in discussions at Montreal & Ottawa Conference was the possibility of a multi-bracket formula, similar to our income tax system.

These various considerations merit more detail work in the implementation phase of the Comprehensive Review process.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

### **MTU 3 DENOMINATION FUNDING FORMULA**

**Origin: Manitou Conference General Meeting (May 2015)**

**Financial Implications if known: nil**

**Staffing Implications if known: nil**

**Source of Funding if known: nil**

**Manitou Conference proposes that:**

**Should the Comprehensive Review funding principle be approved, the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) adopt a funding formula based on a % of total congregational revenues (line 32d of the annual statistical report) rather than based on a % of expenses (line 40), and that the background material prepared for the Manitou Conference General Meeting be forwarded to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.**

#### **Notes on Presentation**

- The numbers in this presentation are mainly from the 2013 Year Book and are the 2012 National Statistics. This data was used because it is the most recent available. The 2014 Year Book has not been published.
- The exception is the Manitou Conference data on slides 10 and 15 to 17. This data, from our Conference Office, is what will be in the 2014 Year Book. We felt since it was available to us that it was best to use the most recent data for presentation to our Conference.
- Should our recommendation receive the approval of Manitou Conference at its 2015 General Meeting we will ask Conference to pass a similar motion for the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council as an alternative to the Comprehensive Review Report Recommendation #6.

#### **Background**

- The current recommendation #6 from the Comprehensive Review is that churches be charged annual fees to pay for support services and governance activities of the regional councils and the denominational council.
- The fee would be based on a % of the Cost to Run a Church (4.75% of Line 40 “Expended for Operation of Pastoral Charge” in the National Statistics)
- The Review Team feels this basis is the easiest to understand, it is the most widely used currently and it gives a reliable figure for actual spending and therefore evidence of the church’s ability to pay.

#### **Concern**

- Our analysis suggests that basing fees on the “Cost to Run a Church” is not a fee based on the ability to pay.
- It is neither a fair nor “just” method
- The cost basis has serious unintended consequences as –
  - In numerous cases churches with high costs have the least ability to pay.
  - It will hurt those churches among us that are struggling the most financially.

*Any church that spends more than 2/3 of its total revenues on the cost to run their church will pay more under the cost basis than under the revenue basis. Those spending less than 2/3rd of*

their total revenues on the cost to run their church (Line 40) and who are therefore stronger financially will, ironically, pay less under the cost basis.

### Recommendation

- Based on the 2013 Year Book (2012 National Statistics) the proposal to assess based on Line 40 - the Cost to Run a Church - at 4.75% would mean a total assessment of \$12.5 million.
- There were several items that could have been used as the base to get the \$12.5 million required e.g. # of members, value of church land, congregational giving, total revenues, costs etc. None are perfect.
- The question we asked is “What is the most fair and most equitable method”?
- We feel “generally speaking” that basing fees on revenues is the fairest method and the better indicator of a church’s “ability to pay”.

Our recommendation is to use Line 32D – Total Revenues. A 3.15% rate (see next slide) will equal the total required assessment of \$12.5 million.

### Impact on Current Conferences

#### Data from 2013 Year Book – 2012 Statistics

|                   | Line 32 D                  |                            | Fees Based                 | Fees Based                 | Test of           |
|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Conference</u> | <u>Revenues</u>            | <u>Line 40</u>             | <u>on Revenues</u>         | <u>on Costs</u>            | <u>Difference</u> |
| N & L             | \$11,858,516               | \$8,916,906                | \$373,492                  | \$423,553                  | -\$50,061         |
| Maritime          | \$40,149,867               | \$29,128,338               | \$1,264,548                | \$1,383,596                | -\$119,048        |
| Mont & Ott        | \$30,185,903               | \$20,340,825               | \$950,726                  | \$966,189                  | -\$15,463         |
| Bay of Q          | \$34,122,559               | \$23,216,506               | \$1,074,714                | \$1,102,784                | -\$28,070         |
| Toronto           | \$69,045,068               | \$40,043,628               | \$2,174,623                | \$1,902,072                | \$272,551         |
| Hamilton          | \$49,145,654               | \$32,038,501               | \$1,547,877                | \$1,521,829                | \$26,048          |
| London            | \$37,945,750               | \$23,909,355               | \$1,195,128                | \$1,135,694                | \$59,434          |
| Manitou           | \$5,300,626                | \$4,052,349                | \$166,947                  | \$192,487                  | -\$25,540         |
| Manitoba & NW Ont | \$20,714,571               | \$14,965,028               | \$652,420                  | \$710,839                  | -\$58,419         |
| Sask              | \$22,073,404               | \$14,627,308               | \$695,217                  | \$694,797                  | \$420             |
| Albt              | \$38,828,908               | \$25,750,188               | \$1,222,944                | \$1,223,134                | -\$190            |
| BC                | \$39,631,586               | \$26,531,157               | \$1,248,225                | \$1,260,230                | -\$12,005         |
| Native Circle     | <u>\$266,028</u>           | <u>\$1,221,813</u>         | <u>\$8,379</u>             | <u>\$58,036</u>            | <u>-\$49,657</u>  |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>\$399,268,440</b>       | <b>\$264,741,902</b>       | <b><u>\$12,575,240</u></b> | <b><u>\$12,575,240</u></b> | <b><u>\$0</u></b> |
| <b>% to Use</b>   | <b><u>3.15%</u></b>        | <b><u>4.75%</u></b>        |                            |                            |                   |
| <b>Total Fees</b> | <b><u>\$12,575,240</u></b> | <b><u>\$12,575,240</u></b> |                            |                            |                   |

**Used this Data to determine revenue % needed (3.15%) so that total fees are equal on revenues and Line 40**

**Used 2013 Year Book, with Statistics from 2012, as this was likely the base when the 4.75% was determined and 2014 book is not available to us at this point.**

### **Why a Fee Based on Cost is Harmful**

- Revenues are the basis of fees (taxes) in our society, and the other denominations mentioned in the Comprehensive Review base their fees on adjusted revenues.
- **An example based on a person** – Two people each earn \$60,000. One has four children and spends almost the family's full earnings on feeding and clothing the family, daycare, schooling, children's sports activities and health care. The second is single, spends very little and saves as much as he can.

Under the recommendation #6, the person with the four children would be taxed more, because his costs are higher. Which is the fairer way to tax these people? On what their costs were or what their incomes were – a cost base or revenue base? Who has the greater ability to pay?

- **Example 1 (using Churches)**– Two Pastoral Charges each have revenues of \$150,000. One is a three point charge with 3 hydro bills, 3 heating bills, 3 snow removal bills and there is very high mileage associated with travel around the three point charge. Total costs are \$140,000.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> Pastoral Charge is a single church. It has utility bills for only one property and is in an area with very little snow and mileage. Costs are \$120,000.
- Based on 4.75% of costs the three point charge would pay \$6,650 in fees while the single church would pay \$5,700 or 17% less. Does that seem Fair and Just? Just because the three point charge has higher costs it is assumed under Recommendation Six to have a greater ability to pay? It is actually the opposite.
- In this case under the revenue base proposal (3.15%) each church would pay \$4,725.
- **Example 2** – Two churches each have revenues of \$150,000. One is struggling. It actually used a GIC to meet costs of \$170,000. The church is slowly going under and will close when its investments run out a few years down the road. The second church is fortunate and spends only \$100,000. It is able to buy a GIC for \$20,000.
- Under the cost method the church that is struggling is assessed a fee of \$8,075. (4.75% of \$170,000). The second church is assessed a fee of \$4,750 (4.75% of \$100,000) and therefore pays \$3,325 less (40%). Is this fair and just? Who has the greater ability to pay - the church that is spending more from the weakest financial position, or the church which is spending less from a much stronger financial position?
- Under the revenue base proposal each church would pay \$4,725.

**Summary Manitou Conference**

**Based on Final 2013 Stats from 2014 Year Book**

|                   | 3.15%               | 4.75%               | Fees in 2018       |                   |                   |                                 |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
|                   | 2013                | 2013                | Fees Based         | Fees Based        |                   | % Diff                          |
| <u>Conference</u> | <u>Line 32 D</u>    | <u>Line 40</u>      | <u>on Revenues</u> | <u>on Costs</u>   | <u>Difference</u> | <u>compared to Fees on Rev.</u> |
| Sudbury           | \$ 2,459,583        | \$ 1,870,196        | \$ 77,466          | \$ 88,834         | -\$ 11,368        | -15%                            |
| North Bay         | \$ 1,685,446        | \$ 1,346,994        | \$ 53,084          | \$ 63,982         | -\$ 10,898        | -21%                            |
| Spirit Dancing    | <u>\$ 1,007,445</u> | <u>\$ 762,972</u>   | <u>\$ 31,730</u>   | <u>\$ 36,241</u>  | <u>-\$ 4,511</u>  | <u>-14%</u>                     |
|                   | <u>\$ 5,152,474</u> | <u>\$ 3,980,162</u> | <u>\$ 162,281</u>  | <u>\$ 189,058</u> | <u>-\$ 26,777</u> | <u>-17%</u>                     |

(Details on slides 15 to 17)

**Other Areas**

Actual Examples Toronto & Hamilton Conference

Fees Based on Costs vs Revenues - 2013 Year Book

|          |         | 2012             | 2012                 |              |               | Fees in 2018 |          |           |             |
|----------|---------|------------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|----------|-----------|-------------|
|          | Members | <u>Line 32 D</u> | <u>Costs Line 40</u> | <u>Diff</u>  | <u>% Diff</u> | 3.15%        | 4.75%    | Diff      | Diff as %   |
|          |         |                  |                      |              |               | On Rev       | On Costs |           | of Rev fees |
| Church A | 516     | \$1,144,408      | \$ 404,720           | \$ 739,688   | 183%          | \$36,044     | \$19,224 | \$16,820  | 47%         |
| Church B | 1373    | \$3,505,118      | \$ 1,435,044         | \$ 2,070,074 | 59%           | \$110,396    | \$68,165 | \$42,232  | 38%         |
| Church C | 79      | \$243,227        | \$ 243,738           | -\$ 511      | 0%            | \$7,661      | \$11,578 | (\$3,917) | -51%        |
| Church D | 88      | \$77,699         | \$ 87,123            | -\$ 9,424    | -11%          | \$2,447      | \$4,138  | (\$1,691) | -69%        |
| Church E | 531     | \$456,411        | \$ 345,493           | \$ 110,918   | 24%           | \$14,375     | \$16,411 | (\$2,036) | -14%        |

*Actual examples. Those churches having costs that are less than 66% of their total revenues will pay more under a revenue base as shown in first two examples above. However they do have the ability to pay. Note that within these conferences there are also many churches struggling (lines 3 & 4). Overall more than 2/3rds of pastoral charges in these areas will be better off under a revenue base.*

**Some Facts on Fees Based on Costs (4.75%) or Revenues (3.15%)**

- Any church that pays less than 2/3<sup>rds</sup> of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their Church will be better off using costs as the base.
- Alternatively any church that spends more than 2/3<sup>rds</sup> of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their Church will be better off using revenues as the base.
- Normally then who would have the greater ability to pay?
- A church that spends 80% of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their church will pay 21% more fees under the Cost formula.
- A church that spends 90% of its revenues on the Costs to Run their church will pay 36% more fees under the Cost formula.
- When the costs to run the church are equal to the church’s total revenues (in churches struggling to stay alive) fees are 51% more under the Cost formula. **See next slide**

**Cost vs Revenue Base  
Impact on Churches**

| <b>Costs as %<br/>of Revenues</b> | <b>Line 32 D<br/>Revenues</b> | <b>Line 40<br/>Costs</b> | <b>Fees Based on</b> |              |             | <b>Diff as % of<br/>Rev Fees</b> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
|                                   |                               |                          | <b>Revenues</b>      | <b>Costs</b> | <b>Diff</b> |                                  |
| 50%                               | \$150,000                     | \$75,000                 | \$4,725              | \$3,563      | \$1,163     | 33%                              |
| 55%                               | \$150,000                     | \$82,500                 | \$4,725              | \$3,919      | \$806       | 21%                              |
| 66%                               | \$150,000                     | \$99,000                 | \$4,725              | \$4,703      | \$23        | 0%                               |
| 80%                               | \$150,000                     | \$120,000                | \$4,725              | \$5,700      | -\$975      | -21%                             |
| 90%                               | \$150,000                     | \$135,000                | \$4,725              | \$6,413      | -\$1,688    | -36%                             |
| 100%                              | \$150,000                     | \$150,000                | \$4,725              | \$7,125      | -\$2,400    | -51%                             |
| 120%                              | \$150,000                     | \$180,000                | \$4,725              | \$8,550      | -\$3,825    | -81%                             |

*Actual examples. Those churches having costs that are less than 66% of their total revenues will pay more under a revenue base as shown in first two examples above. However they do have the ability to pay. Note that within these conferences there are also many churches struggling (lines 3 & 4). Overall more than 2/3rds of pastoral charges in these areas will be better off under a revenue base.*

**Some Facts on Fees Based on Costs (4.75%) or Revenues (3.15%)**

- Any church that pays less than 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their Church will be better off using costs as the base.
- Alternatively any church that spends more than 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their Church will be better off using revenues as the base.
- Normally then who would have the greater ability to pay?
- A church that spends 80% of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their church will pay 21% more fees under the Cost formula.
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- When the costs to run the church are equal to the church’s total revenues (in churches struggling to stay alive) fees are 51% more under the Cost formula. **See next slide**

**Cost vs Revenue Base  
Impact on Churches**

| Costs as %<br>of Revenues | Line 32 D<br>Revenues | Line 40<br>Costs | Fees Based on |         | Diff     | Diff as %<br>of<br>Rev Fees |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------------|---------|----------|-----------------------------|
|                           |                       |                  | Revenues      | Costs   |          |                             |
| 50%                       | \$150,000             | \$75,000         | \$4,725       | \$3,563 | \$1,163  | 33%                         |
| 55%                       | \$150,000             | \$82,500         | \$4,725       | \$3,919 | \$806    | 21%                         |
| 66%                       | \$150,000             | \$99,000         | \$4,725       | \$4,703 | \$23     | 0%                          |
| 80%                       | \$150,000             | \$120,000        | \$4,725       | \$5,700 | -\$975   | -21%                        |
| 90%                       | \$150,000             | \$135,000        | \$4,725       | \$6,413 | -\$1,688 | -36%                        |
| 100%                      | \$150,000             | \$150,000        | \$4,725       | \$7,125 | -\$2,400 | -51%                        |
| 120%                      | \$150,000             | \$180,000        | \$4,725       | \$8,550 | -\$3,825 | -81%                        |

**Cost vs Revenue Base Impact**

|                          | # of Pastoral Charges |                          |                   | % Benefiting<br>with Revenues |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
|                          | Pastoral<br>Charges   | Benefiting with<br>Costs | Rev               |                               |
| <b>Conference</b>        |                       |                          |                   |                               |
| <b>NFLD &amp; Lab</b>    | <b>87</b>             | <b>24</b>                | <b>63</b>         | <b>72%</b>                    |
| <b>Maritimes</b>         | <b>268</b>            | <b>54</b>                | <b>214</b>        | <b>80%</b>                    |
| <b>Toronto</b>           | <b>225</b>            | <b>76</b>                | <b>149</b>        | <b>66%</b>                    |
| <b>Hamilton</b>          | <b>219</b>            | <b>72</b>                | <b>147</b>        | <b>67%</b>                    |
| <b>London</b>            | <b>206</b>            | <b>77</b>                | <b>129</b>        | <b>63%</b>                    |
| <b>Manitou</b>           | <b>52</b>             | <b>13</b>                | <b>39</b>         | <b>75%</b>                    |
| <b>Manitoba &amp; NW</b> | <b><u>156</u></b>     | <b><u>50</u></b>         | <b><u>106</u></b> | <b><u>68%</u></b>             |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b><u>1213</u></b>    | <b><u>366</u></b>        | <b><u>847</u></b> | <b><u>70%</u></b>             |

*Created to determine % of Pastoral charges that were better off using revenues. Shows that 70% of Pastoral Charges have costs to run their church of more than 66% of total revenues. Every Presbytery except Bermuda (2 of 3), had the majority of their Pastoral Charges better off using revenues. Details are available if desired.*



**Impact on Sudbury Presbytery****Fees Based on Costs vs Revenues - 2014 Year Book**

|                           | Members     | 2013               |                    | Diff             | % Diff     | Fees in 2018    |                 |                   |             |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
|                           |             | Line 32 D          | Costs Line 40      |                  |            | On Rev          | On Costs        | Diff              | % Diff      |
|                           |             |                    |                    |                  |            | 3.15%           | 4.75%           |                   |             |
|                           |             |                    |                    |                  |            |                 |                 |                   | of Rev Fees |
| Elliot Lake               | 130         | \$181,044          | \$103,917          | \$77,127         | 74%        | \$5,702         | \$4,936         | \$766             | 13%         |
| Espanola                  | 88          | \$117,153          | \$104,051          | \$13,102         | 11%        | \$3,690         | \$4,942         | (\$1,253)         | -34%        |
| Gore Bay                  | 72          | \$158,882          | \$111,463          | \$47,419         | 30%        | \$5,004         | \$5,294         | (\$290)           | -6%         |
| Little Current            | 119         | \$151,633          | \$99,913           | \$51,720         | 52%        | \$4,776         | \$4,746         | \$30              | 1%          |
| Manit-Tehk                | 97          | \$142,859          | \$87,379           | \$55,480         | 39%        | \$4,499         | \$4,151         | \$349             | 8%          |
| Massey                    | 64          | \$66,236           | \$68,629           | \$2,393          | -4%        | \$2,086         | \$3,260         | (\$1,174)         | -56%        |
| <b>Mindemoya</b>          | <b>82</b>   | <b>\$134,401</b>   | <b>\$143,953</b>   | <b>\$9,552</b>   | <b>-7%</b> | <b>\$4,233</b>  | <b>\$6,838</b>  | <b>(\$2,605)</b>  | <b>-62%</b> |
| All People's              | 28          | \$33,380           | \$27,746           | \$5,634          | 17%        | \$1,051         | \$1,318         | (\$267)           | -25%        |
| Capreol                   | 126         | \$119,461          | \$103,932          | \$15,529         | 13%        | \$3,763         | \$4,937         | (\$1,174)         | -31%        |
| Chelmsford                | 31          | \$35,940           | \$26,685           | \$9,255          | 26%        | \$1,132         | \$1,268         | (\$136)           | -12%        |
| Coniston                  | 19          | \$17,015           | \$13,704           | \$3,311          | 19%        | \$536           | \$651           | (\$115)           | -21%        |
| Copper Cliff              | 128         | \$102,071          | \$95,193           | \$6,878          | 7%         | \$3,215         | \$4,522         | (\$1,307)         | -41%        |
| Lively                    | 137         | \$139,523          | \$95,458           | \$44,065         | 32%        | \$4,394         | \$4,534         | (\$140)           | -3%         |
| Nickel District           | 120         | \$113,432          | \$98,435           | \$14,997         | 13%        | \$3,573         | \$4,676         | (\$1,103)         | -31%        |
| Onaping Falls - Dowling   | 108         | \$104,175          | \$89,608           | \$14,567         | 14%        | \$3,281         | \$4,256         | (\$975)           | -30%        |
| St. Andrew's              | 185         | \$227,854          | \$161,072          | \$66,782         | 29%        | \$7,176         | \$7,651         | (\$474)           | -7%         |
| St. James in the Valley   | 80          | \$48,527           | \$46,737           | \$1,790          | 4%         | \$1,528         | \$2,220         | (\$692)           | -45%        |
| St. Mark's                | 80          | \$59,874           | \$52,648           | \$7,226          | 12%        | \$1,886         | \$2,501         | (\$615)           | -33%        |
| St. Peter's               | 271         | \$263,727          | \$157,289          | \$106,438        | 40%        | \$8,306         | \$7,471         | \$835             | 10%         |
| St. Stephen's On The Hill | 138         | \$132,726          | \$96,377           | \$36,349         | 27%        | \$4,180         | \$4,578         | (\$398)           | -10%        |
| Western Manitoulin        | 43          | <u>\$109,670</u>   | <u>\$86,007</u>    | <u>\$23,663</u>  | <u>22%</u> | <u>\$3,454</u>  | <u>\$4,085</u>  | <u>(\$631)</u>    | <u>-18%</u> |
| Total                     | <u>2146</u> | <u>\$2,459,583</u> | <u>\$1,870,196</u> | <u>\$589,387</u> | <u>24%</u> | <u>\$77,466</u> | <u>\$88,834</u> | <u>(\$11,368)</u> | <u>-15%</u> |

**Note – Mindemoya above, like in church example # 2, had to cash a GIC to meet costs. Would have to pay 62% more under cost basis.**

**Impact on North Bay Presbytery****Fees on Costs vs Revenues - 2014 Year Book**

|                         |             | 2013               | 2013                 |                  |               | Fees in 2018    |                   |                   |                       |
|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
|                         | Members     | <u>Line 32 D</u>   | <u>Costs Line 40</u> | <u>Diff</u>      | <u>% Diff</u> | On Rev<br>3.15% | On Costs<br>4.75% | Diff              | % Diff<br>of Rev Fees |
| Burk's Falls            | 102         | \$107,544          | \$99,571             | \$7,973          | 8%            | \$3,387         | \$4,730           | (\$1,342)         | -40%                  |
| Knox-Callandar          | 53          | \$45,831           | \$42,701             | \$3,130          | 7%            | \$1,443         | \$2,028           | (\$585)           | -41%                  |
| Loring                  | 34          | \$85,524           | \$70,538             | \$14,986         | 21%           | \$2,694         | \$3,351           | (\$657)           | -24%                  |
| Mattawa                 | 47          | \$23,668           | \$19,760             | \$3,908          | 20%           | \$745           | \$939             | (\$193)           | -26%                  |
| Carmichael              | 18          | \$17,288           | \$21,884             | \$4,596          | -21%          | \$544           | \$1,039           | (\$495)           | -91%                  |
| Emmanuel                | 131         | \$125,718          | \$105,158            | \$20,560         | 20%           | \$3,960         | \$4,995           | (\$1,035)         | -26%                  |
| Nipissing-Restoule      | 37          | \$47,925           | \$24,300             | \$23,625         | 97%           | \$1,509         | \$1,154           | \$355             | 24%                   |
| Omond Memorial          | 144         | \$127,829          | \$71,073             | \$56,756         | 80%           | \$4,026         | \$3,376           | \$650             | 16%                   |
| St. Andrews             | 311         | \$303,777          | \$219,618            | \$84,159         | 38%           | \$9,568         | \$10,432          | (\$864)           | -9%                   |
| Trinity                 | 362         | \$331,447          | \$266,760            | \$64,687         | 24%           | \$10,439        | \$12,671          | (\$2,232)         | -21%                  |
| Phelps                  | 15          | \$24,539           | \$9,610              | \$14,929         | 155%          | \$773           | \$456             | \$316             | 41%                   |
| Powassan                | 102         | \$172,870          | \$157,005            | \$15,865         | 10%           | \$5,445         | \$7,458           | (\$2,013)         | -37%                  |
| South River             | 83          | \$115,658          | \$91,840             | \$23,818         | 26%           | \$3,643         | \$4,362           | (\$720)           | -20%                  |
| Sturgeon Falls          | 34          | \$52,690           | \$51,695             | \$995            | 2%            | \$1,660         | \$2,456           | (\$796)           | -48%                  |
| Sundridge               | 76          | \$95,628           | \$86,600             | \$9,028          | 10%           | \$3,012         | \$4,114           | (\$1,102)         | -37%                  |
| Temiscaming: St. Paul's | <u>7</u>    | <u>\$7,510</u>     | <u>\$8,881</u>       | <u>\$1,371</u>   | <u>-15%</u>   | <u>\$237</u>    | <u>\$422</u>      | <u>(\$185)</u>    | <u>-78%</u>           |
| Total                   | <u>1556</u> | <u>\$1,685,446</u> | <u>\$1,346,994</u>   | <u>\$338,452</u> | <u>25%</u>    | <u>\$53,084</u> | <u>\$63,982</u>   | <u>(\$10,898)</u> | <u>-21%</u>           |

**Impact on Spirit Dancing Presbytery**

| Fees on Costs vs Revenues - 2014 Year Book |         |             |               |            |        |              |          |           |             |
|--|---------|-------------|---------------|------------|--------|--------------|----------|-----------|-------------|
|  |         | 3.15%       | 4.75%         |            |        | Fees in 2018 |          |           |             |
|  |         | 2013        | 2013          |            |        | On Rev       | On Costs |           | % Diff      |
|  | Members | Line 32 D   | Costs Line 40 | Diff       | % Diff | 3.15%        | 4.75%    | Diff      | of Rev Fees |
| Chapleau: Trinity                          | 68      | \$51,389    | \$65,595      | -\$ 14,206 | -22%   | \$1,619      | \$3,116  | (\$1,497) | -93%        |
| Cochrane: St. Paul's                       | 58      | \$91,788    | \$44,535      | \$ 47,253  | 106%   | \$2,891      | \$2,115  | \$776     | 27%         |
| Englehart                                  | 64      | \$104,942   | \$61,727      | \$ 43,215  | 70%    | \$3,305      | \$2,932  | \$373     | 11%         |
| Hears: St. Matthew's & St. Paul's          | 16      | \$28,481    | \$21,181      | \$ 7,300   | 34%    | \$897        | \$1,006  | (\$109)   | -12%        |
| Hillview: Pioneer Memorial                 | 38      | \$44,540    | \$44,874      | -\$ 334    | -1%    | \$1,403      | \$2,132  | (\$729)   | -52%        |
| Hornepayne: Grace                          | 46      | \$41,172    | \$25,882      | \$ 15,290  | 59%    | \$1,297      | \$1,229  | \$67      | 5%          |
| Iroquois Falls: Trinity                    | 58      | \$63,354    | \$39,171      | \$ 24,183  | 62%    | \$1,995      | \$1,861  | \$135     | 7%          |
| Kapuskasing                                | 34      | \$73,552    | \$40,195      | \$ 33,357  | 83%    | \$2,317      | \$1,909  | \$407     | 18%         |
| Kirkland Lake: Trinity                     | 30      | \$62,249    | \$54,966      | \$ 7,283   | 13%    | \$1,961      | \$2,611  | (\$650)   | -33%        |
| Matheson: St. Andrews                      | 53      | \$72,283    | \$61,996      | \$ 10,287  | 17%    | \$2,277      | \$2,945  | (\$668)   | -29%        |
| New Liskeard: St. Paul's                   | 115     | \$128,495   | \$109,509     | \$ 18,986  | 17%    | \$4,047      | \$5,202  | (\$1,155) | -29%        |
| Covenant                                   | 224     | \$128,504   | \$112,155     | \$ 16,349  | 15%    | \$4,047      | \$5,327  | (\$1,280) | -32%        |
| Mountjoy                                   | 46      | \$55,205    | \$45,380      | \$ 9,825   | 22%    | \$1,739      | \$2,156  | (\$417)   | -24%        |
| Porcupine                                  | 38      | \$47,572    | \$21,122      | \$ 26,450  | 125%   | \$1,498      | \$1,003  | \$495     | 33%         |
| Val D'Or: Golden Valley                    | 10      | \$13,919    | \$14,684      | -\$ 765    | -5%    | \$438        | \$697    | (\$259)   | -59%        |
| Total                                      | 898     | \$1,007,445 | \$762,972     | \$244,473  | 32%    | \$31,730     | \$36,241 | (\$4,511) | -14%        |

***Note first & 2<sup>nd</sup> churches above. Trinity which is spending much more than their total revenues would, under a cost basis, pay 93% more than under a revenue based system. St. Paul's though, with much greater revenues, and who is much better off financially, would pay less than Trinity. Demonstrates within our Presbytery that the cost basis is not a "Just nor Fair" System.***

**Our Recommendation**

- Using the costs as a basis for fee calculations is UNFAIR and it is not a JUST methodology
- Basing fees on costs results in the unintended consequence that it will hurt churches that are struggling the most.
- 70% of the Pastoral Charges will be worse off using costs as the base
- We recommend that line 32D of the Year Book (Total Amount Raised - Revenues) be used as the base for fee assessment.

### **Final Thoughts**

- If revenues are selected as the base, consideration should be given to excluding revenues received from an property insurance policy as the money will be needed to rebuild.
- **Important** - As fees are based on revenues from two years prior (using 2016 stats in 2018) consider now a policy of having the churches send the 3.15% to the National office in the year of sale for any property sales. This is similar in Ontario when a person sells a car. The buyer must pay the sales tax at point of sale. Otherwise churches which have sold due to closure in 2016 will not be around to pay the fees in 2018. (It is the same issue when basing fees on costs as some churches will have already closed when it comes time to assess fees). This would ensure National receives the fees on property sales and as they would have received the fees early, the actual % in 2018 could be less than the 3.15% used in our study. The same could be put in place for any windfall revenues from bequests etc. although it is not as big an issue if the church has not closed.
- Would likely need to modify Form B to separate these amounts so the amounts are not taxed again in 2018.
- We had some pushback on including fees on bequests. They should be included for two reasons. For churches that will use the money to meet day to day costs, the alternative would be to charge them 4.75% on costs when they spend it. The wealthier churches will not likely use the funds to meet day to day costs and instead spend on capital improvements or additions. These churches then would not pay any fees if they were based on costs as capital is excluded. As a result , only the poorer churches would pay fees and would in fact subsidize the richer ones.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

- transmitted with concurrence by Manitou Conference

## **BQ 8 NATURAL JUSTICE FOR COLLEGE OF MINISTRY**

**Originating Body:** Bay of Quinte Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Bay of Quinte Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct that any College of Ministers ensures natural justice in living out the covenantal relationship between pastoral charges/communities of faith and ministry personnel, by ensuring:**

- a) The scope of the College's role be expanded to include inquiry, hearing processes, and discipline of communities of faith;**
- b) The size of the College's Board reflect the expanded workload this broadened scope will create;**
- c) The name of the College be altered from "College of Ministers" to "College of Ministry" to reflect its broader scope.**

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Bay of Quinte Conference carried this proposal.

## **BLUE 1 COMPOSITE : MISSING & MURDERED ABORIGINAL WOMEN**

**Originating Body:** Blue Commission

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

- a. Call upon the Government of Canada to:**
  - i. Conduct a full Public Inquiry into the more than 1200 cases of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada;**
  - ii. Support and continue to support the struggle against the devaluation of women by conducting this inquiry;**
- b. Call upon churches and ministries of The United Church of Canada to at least annually remember Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women through education, and in our prayers, in particular on the Sunday immediately prior to October 4, the date of the cross-Canada Sisters in Spirit Vigil;**
- c. Urge individuals to participate in the Sisters in Spirit Vigil on October 4;**
- d. Urge congregational members to contact their Member of Parliament to voice support for a National Public Inquiry;**
- e. Call upon the Government of Canada and all levels of governance to put resources towards the implementation of the 16 recommendations made by the Special Committee on Violence against Indigenous women.**

### **Background:**

This composite combines SK 1 and TOR 9.

## **SK 1 SUPPORT AND CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR A NATIONAL PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS**

**Originating Body:** River Bend Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The River Bend Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- 1. Support and continue to support the struggle against the devaluation of women by encouraging a National Public Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls[i];**
- 2. Call upon its churches and ministries to at least annually remember Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women through education[ii], and in our prayers[iii], in particular on the Sunday immediately prior to October 4, the date of the cross-Canada Sisters in Spirit Vigil[iv];**
- 3. Urge individuals to participate in the Sisters in Spirit Vigil on October 4;**
- 4. Urge congregational members to contact their Member of Parliaments to voice support for a National Public Inquiry;**
- 5. Call upon the Government of Canada and all levels of governance to put resources towards the implementation of the 16 recommendations made by the Special Committee on Violence against Indigenous women;**

### **Background:**

As people of faith, we rely on sharing stories: stories of creation, stories of faith, stories of Jesus, stories of salvation. As a church increasingly seeking to strengthen our intercultural identity, it is crucial that our voices be heard, and the voices of those oppressed are heard clearly. We believe in a Holy Love that loves us all equally, and passionately. While it is clear that while the issue of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women is a Canadian issue[v], it is also a faith issue. The issue is a symptom of intersecting colonializing oppressions including racism, patriarchy, and economics. Yet we seek to celebrate and live in a world created by a justice - seeking, story-loving Divine Presence. Without hearing the voices and stories of those directly involved, which an Inquiry would provide, as Canadians we risk perpetuating the errors of the past in trying to fix problems without listening broadly or understanding the issues completely. Any action must be guided by the 'essential voices', that is, those directly involved.

Churches can be safe places for exploring why so little changes have occurred when the economic, social, violence and health disparities between aboriginal communities and non-aboriginal communities are well researched and well documented. At its best, our churches are places for self-reflection and collective action. [vi]

At an ecumenical endeavour held in Saskatoon in 2015, *Voices of Our Sisters: Standing Together in Hope*[vii], stories were shared, and solidarity sought. River Bend Presbytery believes that at the local, regional and national level, we walk with our murdered and missing aboriginal women when we stand with the National Association of Chiefs of Police in partnership with the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC); the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, the Saskatoon Tribal Council, the Assembly of First Nations, the Premier of the Province of Saskatchewan, Amnesty International, and the (Washington based) Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and many others, to support a National Public Inquiry. We choose to seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God and with each other.

### **Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

- i. In May 2013, the United Church's General Secretary wrote Prime Minister Stephen Harper informing him of The United Church of Canada's support of the call by NWAC and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) for a National Inquiry, and urging him to act quickly to institute one. All members of The United Church of Canada were also encouraged to write their respective councillors, mayors, provincial representatives, and MPs.
- ii. Information is available at [www.united-church.ca/getinvolved/takeaction/140912](http://www.united-church.ca/getinvolved/takeaction/140912)
- iii. A prayer, written by Alydia Smith is available at [www.united-church.ca/files/planning/theme/aboriginal\\_prayer.rtf](http://www.united-church.ca/files/planning/theme/aboriginal_prayer.rtf)
- iv. In early 2004, the United and Anglican Churches joined with NWAC to launch the Sisters in Spirit campaign, raising concerns about elevated levels of violence against Aboriginal women. The campaign included a letter from then-Moderator Peter Short and a congregational action kit.
- v. Indigenous women are going missing and being murdered at a much higher rate than other women in Canada—a rate so high it constitutes nothing less than a national human rights crisis. (Amnesty International). According to RCMP data, at least 1,017 Indigenous women and girls were murdered from 1980-2012.
- vi. Summarized from a letter "Call for Collective Action", Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, written by Janet L. Clarke.
- vii. Organizing participants included those from the Anglican Diocese of Saskatoon; the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada-Saskatchewan Synod; Mennonite Church, Saskatchewan; Presbyterian Church in Canada, Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan; Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon; Saskatoon Native Ministry; Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon; and the River Bend Presbytery of The United Church of Canada.



## **TOR 9 PUBLIC INQUIRY FOR MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS**

**Origin:** Living Into Right Relations (LIRR) Circle, Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** minimal to the church

**Staffing Implications if known:** minimal

**Source of Funding if known:** Unknown

**The Living Into Right Relations (LIRR) Circle, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015), direct the General Secretary, General Council to call upon the Government of Canada to conduct a full Public Inquiry into the more than 1200 cases of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada;**

### **Background:**

The gospel of the crucified Jesus calls us to renounce violence, and to seek the ending of violence in society.

The United Church of Canada apologized to First Nation congregations in 1986 and to those First Nation people and communities affected by the Indian Residential School legacy in 1998.

The Native Women's Association of Canada, as part of their Sisters in Spirit campaign, has identified over 1,200 missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls whose cases go back to 1970, and has been calling for a public inquiry into these cases for a decade.

The United Church has called for an inquiry through its staff and partners, but the call needs to be repeated, and with the moral weight of the entire General Council.

The Ontario delegation at the National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in February 2015 released the following Statement:

*"Too many Aboriginal women and girls have experienced violence, been murdered or gone missing. Too many Aboriginal girls spend their lives in constant fear that they will join their family members and friends as just another statistic. This can no longer be tolerated.*

*That is why Ontario's delegation, including family members and representation from the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, Ontario Native Women's Association, Métis Nation of Ontario, and the Independent First Nations, came to the table today - to bring forward concrete actions we can take collectively and collaboratively to prevent the violence from continuing. Today's roundtable reinforced the need for a collaborative, pan-Canadian solution to this national issue.*

*Ontario has identified 10 proposed actions that we can take right now to improve the situation for Aboriginal women and girls, including the creation of a pan-Canadian public awareness campaign and a socio-economic action plan for Aboriginal women and girls. Leaders of Canada's provinces and territories and National Aboriginal Organizations have agreed that*

*such a plan is necessary to address the root causes of violence. Having the federal government's participation in that plan is critical.*

*To end violence against Aboriginal women and girls, we need all partners working together and committing to taking joint action. We need co-ordinated engagement between Aboriginal, provincial, territorial and federal governments to support awareness and prevention, community safety and healing, and improved police and justice responses.*

*We have also heard the call for a forum for hearing and healing from the families and Aboriginal organizations here today. We have begun this process in Ontario, and we support the call for national forums for the families of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.”*

The federal government has ignored repeated pleas to hold such an inquiry, despite petitions calling for a public inquiry having been supported by the United Church and signed by thousands of Canadians, including many within the United Church's membership.

### **Intermediate Court action**

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

## **BLUE 2 COMPOSITE: ISRAEL-PALESTINE TWO-STATE SOLUTION**

**Originating Body:** Blue Commission

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to revise the policy on Palestine/Israel by:

1. Stating that The United Church of Canada no longer asserts its preference for a two-state solution for achieving peace for the people of Palestine and Israel;
2. affirming unequivocally the right of self-determination for Palestinians and declare that any choice regarding statehood must be made by the people living in Israel-Palestine;
3. re-affirming the right of Israelis and Palestinians to live peacefully within internationally recognized borders.

### **Background:**

This composite combines BC 2 and LON 22.

## **BC 2 ISRAEL-PALESTINE TWO-STATE SOLUTION**

**Origin: Fraser Presbytery**

**Financial Implications if known: unknown**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Fraser Presbytery proposed that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council revise the policy on Palestine/Israel by:**

- 1. stating that The United Church of Canada no longer asserts a preference for a two-state solution for achieving peace for the people of Palestine and Israel;**
- 2. affirming unequivocally the right of self-determination for Palestinians and declare that any choice regarding statehood must be made by the people living in Israel-Palestine.**

### **Background**

The report of the Working group on Israel/Palestine Policy stated that “United Church policy should identify and support initiatives that work toward the creation of a viable Palestinian state.”

Many statements on The United Church of Canada website affirm support for a two-state solution.

“The working group concurs that the window for a two-state option is drawing to a close.” Many advocates for a just resolution of the conflict believe that a two-state solution is no longer possible or viable.

The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine Policy states that “Church policy must honour the right of self-determination for both Israelis and Palestinians. The choice of one or two states must be made by the people themselves.”

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

## **LON 22 ISRAEL-PALESTINE TWO STATE SOLUTION**

**Origin:** Social Justice Division of London Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unchanged

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Social Justice Division of London Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Direct the Executive of the General Council to clarify the policy on Palestine/Israel by:**

- 1. stating that The United Church of Canada no longer asserts its preference for a two-state solution for achieving peace for the people of Palestine and Israel;**
- 2. affirming unequivocally the right of self-determination for Palestinians and declare that the choice of one or two states must be made by the people themselves;**
- 3. re-affirming the right of Israelis and Palestinians to live peacefully within internationally recognized borders;**

### **Background:**

- The report of the Working group on Israel/Palestine Policy stated that “United Church policy should identify and support initiatives that work toward the creation of a viable Palestinian state.”
- Many statements on The United Church of Canada website affirm support for a two-state solution.
- “The working group concurs that the window for a two-state option is drawing to a close.”
- Many advocates for a just resolution of the conflict believe that a two-state solution is no longer possible or viable.
- The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine Policy states that “Church policy must honour the right of self-determination for both Israelis and Palestinians. The choice of one or two states must be made by the peoples themselves.”

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

### **BC 3 TOWARD A JUST PEACE IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE**

**Origin:** Faith Public Witness Cluster, Comox-Nanaimo Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** No change in staff numbers. Staff would work from this new policy basis.

**Volunteers:** The United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel would support the above policy change.

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Faith Public Witness Cluster, Comox-Nanaimo Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

**expand the current strategies and actions approved at the 41st General Council to address the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories by the state of Israel by also:**

- 1. initiating and developing a program of education and advocacy related to divestment from and economic sanctions against all corporations and institutions complicit in or benefitting from the illegal occupation. This would include education about “nostalgia” tourism which bolsters the oppression of Palestinians; and**
- 2. encouraging all courts, bodies and members of The United Church of Canada to apply such divestment strategies and sanctions, until such time as the occupation of the Palestinian territories ends.**

#### **Background**

"A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine" issued in December 2009 by Christians in Palestine calls upon Christian Churches around the world "to stand alongside the oppressed and to preserve the word of God as good news for all... not to offer a theological cover-up for the injustices we suffer, for the sin of the occupation imposed upon us... We call on you to say a word of truth and to take a position of truth with regard to Israel's occupation of Palestinian land. As we have already said, we see boycott and divestment as tools of non-violence for justice, peace and security for all" (A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine: Section 6).

Bishop Desmond Tutu has stated that “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.”

The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine policy and subsequent motion passed at the 41st General Council approved a number of strategies and actions by the United Church aimed at ending the occupation (numbered 1-11 in General Council Proposal GS3), including a boycott of

products produced by Israeli companies and groups in the occupied territory (actually worded “products produced in the settlements”).

Recent visits to the occupied territory have shown that the rate of illegal settlement, demolition of Palestinian homes and farms, confiscation of land, restriction on Palestinians’ movements, diversion and confiscation of water resources, and other illegal actions has not decreased since the general Council last met in 2012. For example, there are now approximately 600,000 Israeli settlers in the occupied territory. In 2014 alone, according to UN figures, over 1,177 additional Palestinians were made homeless by demolitions in the West Bank, half of them children. Many of these demolitions have taken place in the winter. Approximately 100,000 Palestinians are still homeless after the 2014 attack on Gaza.

Many basic rights continue to be denied to Palestinians under occupation. Hundreds of children, some as young as five years old have been arrested, detained and interrogated without parental accompaniment. Many have been incarcerated. “Administrative” detentions of adults often result in incarceration for months or years without charge or legal process.

Many non-Jewish Israeli citizens such as the Bedouin and Palestinian Christians are also being denied rights, services and privileges afforded to Jewish citizens. Legislation being introduced in the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) seeks to further entrench these injustices in law. The continued expansion of Jewish roads and settlements and takeover of Palestinian lands and resources now threaten the possibility of a two-state solution. A one-state solution is problematical for the aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians. Decisive and effective action is urgently needed.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Comox-Nanaimo Presbytery - Concurrence

Agreement from BC Conference

## **TOR 1 TOWARD A JUST PEACE IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE**

**Origin:** The United Network for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) – Toronto group, through the Social Justice and World Affairs Committee, South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** Staff time to develop a program will be required

**Source of Funding if known:** Likely from existing budgets

**The United Network for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) – Toronto group, through the Social Justice and World Affairs Committee of South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference, proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Direct the Executive of the General Council to expand the current strategies and actions approved at the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council to address the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories by the state of Israel by also:**

- a) initiating and developing a program of education and advocacy within The United Church of Canada related to divestment from and economic sanctions against all corporations and institutions complicit in or benefitting from the illegal occupation; and**
- b) encouraging all courts, bodies and members of The United Church of Canada to apply such divestment strategies and sanctions, until such time as the occupation of the Palestinian territories ends.**

### **Background**

"A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine" issued in December 2009 by Christians in Palestine calls upon Christian Churches around the world *"to stand alongside the oppressed and to preserve the word of God as good news for all.... not to offer a theological cover-up for the injustices we suffer, for the sin of the occupation imposed upon us.... We call on you to say a word of truth and to take a position of truth with regard to Israel's occupation of Palestinian land. As we have already said, we see boycott and divestment as tools of non-violence for justice, peace and security for all."* (A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine: Section 6).

Bishop Tutu has stated that *"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor."*

The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine policy and subsequent motion passed at the 41st General Council approved a number of strategies and actions by the United Church aimed at ending the occupation (numbered 1-11 in proposal GS3), including a boycott of products produced by Israeli companies and groups in the occupied territory (actually worded "products produced in the settlements").



Palestinian civil society leaders and organizations have been calling for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) since 2005, and the Kairos Palestine document of 2009, affirmed by the United Church in 2010, also called for BDS. Yet while the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council 2012 approved a limited boycott (economic action) campaign against settlement products, the United Church has not undertaken any education or action related to divestment and/or sanctions.

The success or failure of boycott and other such measures is hard to determine in complex historical contexts, but it is worth noting that Sodastream International Ltd. announced last October it was moving its factory out of the Ma' Ale Adumim settlement in the West Bank.

Recent visits to the occupied territories have shown that the rate of illegal settlement, demolition of Palestinian homes and farms, confiscation of land, restriction on Palestinians' movements, diversion and confiscation of water resources, and other illegal actions has not decreased since the general Council last met in 2012. There are now approximately 600,000 Israeli settlers in the occupied territory. In the month of January (2015) alone, 1,700 additional Palestinians were made homeless by demolitions. Approximately 100,000 Palestinians are still homeless after the 2014 attack on Gaza. Many basic rights continue to be denied to Palestinians under occupation.

Many non-Jewish Israeli citizens such as the Bedouin and Palestinian Christians are also being denied rights, services and privileges afforded to Jewish citizens. Legislation being introduced in the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) seeks to further entrench these injustices in law.

The expansion of Jewish roads and settlements and takeover of Palestinian lands and resources continues at an alarming rate. Decisive and effective action is urgently needed.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Received by South West Presbytery (April 18, 2015) and passed on to Toronto Conference with non-concurrence.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

## **MAR 4 EXTENDING SUPPORT FOR A JUST PEACE IN ISRAEL / PALESTINE**

**Origin:** Chignecto Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Proposed by Chignecto Presbytery that:**

**That the 42nd General Council (2015):**

- 1. Affirm the work of the United Network for a Just Peace for Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) and General Council staff in raising awareness of the United Church of Canada policy in support of a just peace for Palestine and Israel.**

**And direct the Executive of the General Council to:**

- 2. Expand the current strategies and actions approved at the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council to provide additional resources for use in local mission units to deepen understandings for denominational members as to why Palestinians, cry out from their suffering under Israeli occupation<sup>i</sup> by:**
  - a) Providing additional resources to allow UNJPPI and General Council staff to build and deepen relations with Canadian, American and British churches and church related Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in order to co-ordinate and share in the production of resources and programs focussed on supporting a just peace for Palestinians and Israelis;**
  - b) Developing a partnership with Independent Jewish Voices and deepening our relationship with that group in advocating for a just peace for Palestine and Israel;**
  - c) Dialoguing with other denominations and church related bodies about their research into companies that are complicit in or substantially benefit from violations of the 4<sup>th</sup> Geneva Conventions<sup>ii</sup> and/or the suppression of human rights and/or international humanitarian law from the illegal occupation<sup>iii</sup><sup>iv</sup> and the conflict between Israel and Palestine;**
  - d) develop and implement an ethical divestment strategy from companies that derive substantial financial benefit or that contribute significantly to furthering the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory and recommends to the United Church of Canada, its Pension Fund and Foundation and other related bodies including congregations to divest from companies that derive substantial financial benefit from the illegal Israeli occupation;**
  - e) Developing a program of education and advocacy relating to divestment from and economic sanctions against corporations and institutions complicit in or substantially benefitting from the illegal occupation. This would include**

**education about nostalgia tourism which bolsters the oppression of Palestinians; and**

- f) Encouraging all courts, bodies and members of The United Church of Canada to apply such divestment strategies and sanctions, until such time as the ongoing illegal occupation as defined within the parameters of the 4<sup>th</sup> Geneva Convention<sup>v</sup> of Palestine ends.**

### **Background**

“A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine” issued in December 2009 by Christians in Palestine calls upon Christian Churches around the world “to stand alongside the oppressed and to preserve the word of God as good news for all... not to offer a theological cover-up for the injustices we suffer, for the sin of the occupation imposed upon us... We call on you to say a word of truth and to take a position of truth with regard to Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land. As we have already said, we see boycott and divestment as tools of non-violence for justice, peace and security for all.” (A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine: Section 6).

Bishop Tutu has stated that “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.”

The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine policy and subsequent motion passed at the 41st General Council approved a number of strategies and actions by the United Church aimed at ending the occupation (numbered 1-11 in proposal GS3), including a boycott of products produced by Israeli companies and groups in the occupied territory (actually worded “products produced in the settlements”).

“For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their soul?” These words of Jesus have guided the United Church of Canada since our inception in regards to how we use our resources in standing for social justice.

### **Reports from The United Church of Canada (UCC) Ecumenical Accompaniers (EAs), Partners, Israeli and Palestinian Peace Activists, NGO’s and the United Nations (UN):**

Since the last General Council all of the above named bodies have reported the situation for Palestinians has deteriorated significantly. Settlements continue to expand along with settler violence. The destruction of olive trees and other crops by settlers and Israeli forces continues in the occupied territories including an attack this year against UCC partner, the Tent of Nations, where over 1,500 trees were destroyed.<sup>vi</sup>

Dr. Jeff Halper, co-founder of The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, on his cross Canada tour in 2015, spoke at length about the level of disruption of Palestinian lives through increasing levels of property confiscations and the demolitions of homes and other structures<sup>vii</sup>. Another UCC partner, Defense for Children Internal – Palestine (DCP-I), has launched the #Beituniaboys campaign<sup>viii</sup>. It focuses on the killing of two innocent boys, Nadeem Siam Nawara and Mohammad Mahmoud by Israeli soldiers near Ofer Prison on Naka Day 2014. The murders were captured by video cameras. The Israeli soldier(s) who fired the shots were recorded on CNN footage. With overwhelming evidence there has still been no prosecution. The

#Beituniboys campaign is meant to focus attention on the impunity of Israeli soldiers from prosecution for war crimes.

A recent report by UNICEF confirms several of the concerns elucidated by DCI-P around this and other violations of the rights of children such as underage arrests, illegal detention, forced confessions, confessions written in Hebrew rather than Arabic, use of children as human shields by Israeli military and settlers, forcing children to inform on other Palestinians, harassment of children, violence against Palestinian children and killing of Palestinian children by Israeli military forces.<sup>ix</sup>

Amnesty International in its 2013 report, “Trigger Happy”, documents Israeli abuse of power in the West Bank in provoking responses from Palestinians, illegal arrests including those of under-aged children, illegal detentions, Israeli military court abuses including a conviction rate in excess of 99% against Palestinians, use of excessive force up to and including deadly force against the Palestinian population in the West Bank.<sup>x</sup>

The World Council of Churches (WCC) in July 2014 issued the, “Statement on Economic Measures and Christian Responsibility toward Israel and Palestine”. In the document, the WCC commends the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Methodist Church for their recent economic actions in support of peace. It noted that boycotts are, “bearing fruit especially with the European Union.” The statement reminded members that, “We are called to take action in support of peaceful solutions to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Economic pressure, appropriately and openly applied, is one such means of action.”<sup>xi</sup> Ethical investing and divesting from certain companies and industries has been a hallmark of our United Church since inception.

The disproportionate level of violence launched in 2014 by Israel against Palestinians and especially those living in Gaza requires deeper levels of commitment and action if a just peace is to emerge.

In the summer of 2014 Israel broke the existing cease fire with Gaza and then launched attacks for 50 days. The Israel Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) published the following detailed statistical information on the 50 days:

### **People**

- 2,147 Palestinians were killed, including 530 children and 302 women. 81% were civilians, compared to 9% of the 70 Israelis killed.
- Among the dead were 16 journalists, 23 health care personnel and 11 The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) employees.
- 10,870 Palestinians were wounded, including 3,303 children and 2,101 women. A third of the injured children (around 3,000) will suffer permanent disabilities.
- 100,000 Palestinians were evacuated from their homes either because of Israeli threats or because their homes were destroyed or seriously damaged. They have found refuge in UN facilities or with other families, with dozens of people housed in the same home.

### **Buildings and equipment**

- The total number of homes partially or completely destroyed since the start of this latest war on Gaza reached 17,132: 2,465 homes were completely destroyed and 13,644 homes seriously damaged. Tens of thousands of additional homes suffered less- severe damage.
- The number of mosques targeted totaled 171; 62 mosques were totally destroyed.
- 10 churches were damaged.
- 222 schools were destroyed, including 141 government, 76 UNRWA and five private institutions. In addition, six universities were demolished.
- 29 hospitals and primary health care clinics were damaged, along with 36 ambulances.
- 55 fishing boats also were destroyed affecting 3,000 individuals dependent on them for a living, along with 48 NGO's that provide the civilians with services.
- 372 businesses, factories and other industrial or commercial operations were damaged, as well as 19 financial institutions.

### **Economic impact**

- The direct and indirect economic losses from the war are estimated to be \$3.6 billion.<sup>xii</sup> Each United Church Ecumenical Accompanier has reported and documented breaches of the 4<sup>th</sup> Geneva Convention, violations of international human rights and humanitarian laws. Their experience of living in the West Bank gives them a unique vantage point. Certainly these eye witness accounts bear faithful and credible witness to the reality of the oppression and the loss of human dignity suffered by Palestinians in the West Bank.<sup>xiii</sup>

It is helpful for Commissioners to recognize certain information not widely reported in the mainstream media in Canada or the US.

- A ten year statistical analysis shows a disproportionate level of violence against Palestinians.<sup>xiv</sup> The last three years have been even more devastating.<sup>xv</sup>
- According to UN documentation, since the end of the devastating conflict between Israel and Gaza this summer Israel was responsible for 94 of the 95 recorded cease fire violations between the end of Aug and Dec. 21, 2014<sup>xvi</sup>.
- Five Gazan children have frozen to death this winter because of lack of adequate shelter created by the devastation of Israel's assault this past summer.<sup>xvii xviii</sup> The situation in Gaza is not improving because of the continuing Israeli blockade.

Recent visits to the occupied territory have shown that the rate of illegal settlement, demolition of Palestinian homes and farms, confiscation of land, restriction on Palestinians' movements, diversion and confiscation of water resources, and other illegal actions has not decreased since the General Council last met in 2012. There are now approximately 600,000 Israeli settlers in the occupied territory. In the month of January (2015) alone, 1700 additional Palestinians were made homeless by demolitions. Approximately 100,000 Palestinians are still homeless after the 2014 attack on Gaza. The level of violence directed toward Palestinians and suppression of human rights has only deepened since GC 41.

Many non-Jewish, Israeli citizens such as the Bedouin and Palestinian Christians are also being denied rights, services and privileges afforded to Jewish citizens. Legislation introduced in the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) has further entrenched these injustices in law.

The continued expansion of Jewish roads and settlements and takeover of Palestinian lands and resources has all but destroyed the possibility of a two-state solution. On March 16, 2015 Israeli

Prime Minister Netanyahu stated there would never be a Palestinian state while he was in power. This is a complete reversal of his Bar-Ilan two state speech in 2009. Decisive and effective action is urgently needed from churches and civil society to push governments to create a long term solution.

Palestinian and Israeli peace activists, ecumenical and global partners continue to call for solidarity and ongoing supportive action in working toward a just and lasting peace for all who are suffering as a result of the ongoing conflict.

There is evidence that global pressure (including economic action) to end the occupation is beginning to have an impact. This is highlighted by SodaStreams decision to move its factory out of a West Bank settlement.<sup>xix</sup>

It is helpful to remember that the boycott campaign against apartheid in South Africa began in the 1960's and only gained minimal support in the 1970's and fuller support in the 1980's. Apartheid began to be dismantled in 1990.

It is time for the General Council and the United Church of Canada to follow the lead of several European churches to stand for justice for Palestinians. The Presbyterian (USA) church has bravely extended its boycott to include Hewlett Packard, Motorola and Caterpillar because of their complicity in the occupation. The WCC statement notes economic pressure is appropriate and it is beginning to show results. And, what will it profit us to not take a stand while our Palestinian brothers and sisters continue to suffer the loss of dignity, heart and soul through an illegal occupation that is over 47 years old?

#### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett / Sean Handcock moved that the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #4 entitled "Extending Support for a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine" to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada.

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

Ross Bartlett / Sean Handcock moved that the letter from Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek be appended to Proposal #4 entitled "Extending Support for a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine".

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

### **Appendix A**

My dear sisters and brothers in the United Church of Canada:

I thank you again for the decision of your last General Council to take action to support the end of the occupation of Palestine. Your Unsettling Goods campaign has helped to build awareness of the injustice of the occupation among Canadian Christians. The boycott of goods produced in illegal settlements by the United Church and other churches around the world has begun to bear fruit by bringing economic pressure on the Israeli government. Your commitment to a just peace has given us strength in the face of great adversity.

Since your last General Council the situation for Palestinians has deteriorated significantly. Settlements continue to expand as does settler violence and the theft of water and other natural resources. The destruction of olive trees and other crops by settlers and Israeli forces continues. There are increasing levels of abuses of power by the Israeli military including property confiscations, demolitions of homes and other structures, illegal arrests of under-aged children, illegal detentions, torturing prisoners, the use of excessive force up to and including deadly force against the Palestinian population. This is all backed by Israeli military courts with a conviction rate in excess of 99% against Palestinians. The injustice against Palestinians continues to deepen.

Beyond all of this was the horror of the war against Gaza last summer. Over 2,200 Palestinians were killed including over 500 children by Israeli forces. Current reports are stating that at the current pace it will take over 100 years to rebuild.

I therefore commend you to carry on with and expand your Unsettling Goods campaign. I urge the United Church of Canada to join with other denominations around the globe who have decided to boycott and divest from companies that benefit from the occupation. Also I urge you to recognize your own country's complicity in Palestinian suffering under occupation. Please read and study the proposals before you that advocating furthering boycotts and divestment.

As you have courageously done before, may you once again witness to the cause of Christ's justice to free the oppressed and by so doing to liberate the oppressor so that these two peoples can finally be reconciled and live together in dignity, security and peace.

God bless you all, as you as a Church wrestle to discern what God requires of you in this hour.

Yours faithfully,  
Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek

\*An intro to Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek:

**Canon Naim Ateek: Founder/Director**, Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, Jerusalem

Born in 1937 in the Palestinian village of Beisan, Ateek moved to Nazareth after Israel's occupation of Beisan in 1948. He was ordained in the Anglican (Episcopal) Church in 1967, and earned degrees from Hardin-Simmons University and the Church Divinity School of the Pacific; he also holds a doctorate of divinity degree from the San Francisco Theological Seminary. Ateek established the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem in 1991. He is author and editor of numerous books, and has been called "the Desmond Tutu of Palestine" and the "Founder of Palestinian Liberation Theology".

<sup>i</sup> Introduction Kairos Palestine document: <http://www.kairospalestine.ps/content/kairos-document>

<sup>i</sup> [www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/7c4d08d9b287a42141256739003e636b/6756482d86146898c125641e004aa3c5](http://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/7c4d08d9b287a42141256739003e636b/6756482d86146898c125641e004aa3c5)

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?pr=71&code=mwp&p1=3&p2=4&p3=6>

<sup>iv</sup> Roberts, Adam. "Prolonged Military Occupation: The Israeli-Occupied Territories Since 1967". *The American Journal of International Law* (American Society of International Law) **84** (1): 69. doi:10.2307/2203016. SC Res. 446 (Mar. 22, 1979), adopted by 12 votes to none, with 3 abstentions (Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States), reaffirmed the applicability of the fourth Geneva Convention, as well as opposing the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law>

<sup>vi</sup> <http://rabbibrant.com/2014/05/21/israeli-military-destroys-orchards-at-tent-of-nations-please-act-now/>

<sup>vii</sup> <http://www.icahd.org/>

<sup>viii</sup> <http://www.nomoreforgottenlives.com/>

<sup>ix</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/oPt/Children\\_in\\_Israeli\\_Military\\_Detention\\_-\\_Observations\\_and\\_Recommendations\\_-\\_Bulletin\\_No.\\_2\\_-\\_February\\_2015.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/oPt/Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_-_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_Bulletin_No._2_-_February_2015.pdf)

<sup>x</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/articles/news/2014/02/trigger-happy-israeli-army-and-police-use-reckless-force-west-bank/>

<sup>xi</sup> <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/geneva-2014/statement-on-economic-measures-and-christian-responsibility-toward-israel-and-palestine>

<sup>xii</sup> <http://www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org/main/component/content/article/18/282-gaza-in-crisis>

<sup>xiii</sup> The blog postings and letters from Ecumenical Accompaniers can be found at: <http://www.united-church.ca/getinvolved/global/returned>

<sup>xiv</sup> Data collected from B'Tselem and UN agencies:

| Fatalities | Palestinian | Israeli | Palestinian Youth | Israeli Youth |
|------------|-------------|---------|-------------------|---------------|
| 2005-2014  | 5921        | 252     | 1293              | 21            |

Ratios: 23.5 Palestinians: 1 Israeli

61.5 Palestinian youth: 1 Israeli youth

<sup>xv</sup> Data collected from B'Tselem and UN agencies

| Fatalities | Palestinian | Israeli   | Palestinian Youth | Israeli Youth |
|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------|
| 2012       | 254         | 4         | 43                | 0             |
| 2013       | 38          | 1         | 5                 | 0             |
| 2014       | <u>2262</u> | <u>86</u> | <u>511</u>        | <u>4</u>      |
|            | <b>2554</b> | <b>91</b> | <b>559</b>        | <b>4</b>      |

Ratios: 61 Palestinians: 1 Israeli

112 Palestinian youth: 1 Israeli youth

<sup>xvi</sup> <http://www.imemc.org/article/70072>

<sup>xvii</sup> <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/middle-east-unrest/father-finds-five-month-old-son-frozen-death-gaza-n289371>

<sup>xviii</sup> <http://mondoweiss.net/2015/01/exposure-freezing-temperatures>

<sup>xix</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/oct/29/sodastream-move-factory-west-bank-israel-slash-forecast>



## **LON 23 DIVESTMENT FOR A JUST PEACE IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE**

**Origin:** Social Justice Division of London Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Social Justice Division of London Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015): In light of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine Policy adopted by The 41<sup>st</sup> General Council in which Section 9, Sub-section (d) directed the Executive of the General Council to explore the wisdom of divesting in companies that are profiting from or supporting the occupation;**

- 1. direct the General Secretary, General Council to divest The United Church of Canada funds from companies that derive substantial financial benefit or that contribute significantly to furthering the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, and**
- 2. recommends The United Church of Canada Pension Fund and the United Church Foundation and other related including congregations divest from companies that derive substantial financial benefit from the illegal Israeli occupation.**

### **Background:**

“For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their soul?” These words of Jesus have guided The United Church of Canada since our inception in regards to how we use our financial resources. Ethical investing and divesting from certain companies and industries has been a hallmark of our United Church since inception.

In the 1970s and 80s we recognized the importance of these policies when we engaged in economic action to raise awareness of the sin of apartheid in South Africa.

Since the 38<sup>th</sup> General Council, the General Council has taken progressively stronger stands with respect to action in support of a just and lasting peace for Palestine and Israel.

The General Council Executive was asked by the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council to consider the wisdom of divesting from companies that have derived Council has taken no action.

**Reports from The United Church of Canada Ecumenical Accompaniers, Partners, Israeli and Palestinian Peace Activists, Non-Governmental Organisations and the United Nations:** Since the last General Council all of these bodies have reported the situation for Palestinians has deteriorated significantly. Settlements continue to expand along with settler violence. The destruction of olive trees and other crops by settlers and Israeli forces continues in the occupied territories including an attack this year against United Church partner, the Tent of Nations, where over 1,500 trees were destroyed.

Dr. Jeff Halper, co-founder of The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, on his cross Canada tour in 2015, spoke at length about the level of disruption of Palestinian lives through increasing levels of property confiscations and the demolitions of homes and other structures.

Another United Church partner, Defense for Children Internal - Palestine, has launched the #Beituniaboys campaign . It focuses on the killing of two innocent boys, Nadeem Siam Nawara and Mohammad Mahmoud by Israeli soldiers near Ofer Prison on Naka Day 2014. The murders were captured by video cameras. The Israeli soldier(s) who fired the shots were recorded on CNN footage. With overwhelming evidence there has still been no prosecution. The #Beituniaboys campaign is meant to focus attention on the impunity of Israeli soldiers from prosecution for war crimes.

A recent report by UNICEF confirms several of the concerns elucidated by Defence for Children Internal-Palestine (DCI-P) around this and other violations of the rights of children such as underage arrests, illegal detention, forced confessions, confessions written in Hebrew rather than Arabic, use of children as human shields by Israeli military and settlers, forcing children to inform on other Palestinians, harassment of children, violence against Palestinian children and killing of Palestinian children by Israeli military forces.

Amnesty International in its 2013 report, “Trigger Happy”, documents Israeli abuse of power in the West Bank in provoking responses from Palestinians, illegal arrests including those of under-aged children, illegal detentions, Israeli military courts with a conviction rate in excess of 99% against Palestinians, use of excessive force up to and including deadly force against the Palestinian population in the West Bank.

The table below shows just one measure of the disproportionate level of violence experienced by Palestinians over the past ten years.

|                         |                     |                |                           |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Fatalities<br>2005-2014 | Palestinian<br>5921 | Israeli<br>252 | Palestinian Youth<br>1293 | Israeli Youth<br>21 |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------------------|---------------------|

In the summer of 2014 Israel broke the existing cease fire with Gaza and then launched attacks for 50 days that resulted in:

**People:**

- 2,147 Palestinians were killed, including 530 children and 302 women. 81% were civilians, compared to 9% of the 70 Israelis killed.
- Among the dead were 16 journalists, 23 health care personnel and 11 The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) employees.
- 10,870 Palestinians were wounded, including 3,303 children and 2,101 women. A third of the injured children (around 3,000) will suffer permanent disabilities.
- 100,000 Palestinians were evacuated from their homes either because of Israeli threats or because their homes were destroyed or seriously damaged. They have found refuge in UN facilities or with other families, with dozens of people housed in the same home.

### **Buildings and equipment**

- The total number of homes partially or completely destroyed since the start of this latest war on Gaza reached 17,132: 2,465 homes were completely destroyed and 13,644 homes seriously damaged. Tens of thousands of additional homes suffered less- severe damage.
- The number of mosques targeted totaled 171; 62 mosques were totally destroyed.
- 10 churches were damaged.
- 222 schools were destroyed, including 141 government, 76 UNRWA and five private institutions. In addition, six universities were demolished.
- 29 hospitals and primary health care clinics were damaged, along with 36 ambulances.
- 55 fishing boats also were destroyed affecting 3,000 individuals dependent on them for a living, along with 48 NGO's that provide the civilians with services.
- 372 businesses, factories and other industrial or commercial operations were damaged, as well as 19 financial institutions.

### **Economic impact**

The direct and indirect economic losses from the war are estimated to be \$3.6 billion. The World Council of Churches in July 2014 issued the, "Statement on Economic Measures and Christian Responsibility toward Israel and Palestine". In the document, the World Council of Churches (WCC) commends the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Methodist Church for their recent economic actions in support of peace. It noted that boycotts are, "bearing fruit especially with the European Union." The statement reminded members that, "We are called to take action in support of peaceful solutions to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Economic pressure, appropriately and openly applied, is one such means of action."

Each United Church Ecumenical Accompanier has reported and documented breaches of the 4th Geneva Convention, violations of international human rights and humanitarian laws. Their experience of living in the West Bank gives them a unique vantage point. Certainly these eye witness accounts bear faithful and credible witness to the reality of the oppression and the loss of human dignity suffered by Palestinians in the West Bank.

It is time for the General Council and The United Church of Canada to follow the lead of several European churches and stand for justice for Palestinians through our investments. The Presbyterian (USA) church has bravely extended its boycott to include Hewlett Packard, Motorola and Caterpillar because of their complicity in the occupation. The WCC statement notes economic pressure is appropriate and it is beginning to show results. And, what will it profit us to not take a stand while our Palestinian brothers and sisters continue to suffer the loss of dignity, heart and soul through an illegal occupation that is over 47 years old?

<http://rabbibrant.com/2014/05/21/israeli-military-destroys-orchards-at-tent-of-nations-please-act-now/>

<http://www.icahd.org/>

<http://www.nomoreforgottenlives.com/>

[http://www.unicef.org/oPt/Children\\_in\\_Israeli\\_Military\\_Detention\\_-\\_Observations\\_and\\_Recommendations\\_-\\_Bulletin\\_No.\\_2\\_-\\_February\\_2015.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/oPt/Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_-_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_Bulletin_No._2_-_February_2015.pdf)

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/articles/news/2014/02/trigger-happy-israeli-army-and-police-use-reckless-force-west-bank/>

Data collected from B'Tselem and UN agencies.

<http://www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org/main/component/content/article/18/282-gaza-in-crisis>

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/geneva-2014/statement-on-economic-measures-and-christian-responsibility-toward-israel-and-palestine>

The blog postings and letters from Ecumenical Accompaniers can be found at:

<http://www.united-church.ca/getinvolved/global/returned>

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **TOR 2 RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING TOWARDS PEACE BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND ISRAELIS**

**Origin:** Bedford Park United Church, Toronto Southeast Presbytery, Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications:** allocate to this initiative at least 50% of existing financial resources devoted to peace-building in Israel/Palestine

**Source of Funding:** General Council budget

**Staffing Implications:** allocate to this initiative at least 50% of existing staff resources devoted to peace-building in Israel/Palestine

**Volunteer Implications:** mobilizing people feeling called to do the work of building relationships of trust.

**Bedford Park United Church of Toronto Southeast Presbytery, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary of the General Council to allocate resources of staff time and money to work on developing a resource listing organizations both in Canada and in Israel/Palestine that foster the building of relationships of trust between:**

- **The United Church of Canada and the Canadian Jewish community,**
- **The United Church of Canada and Canadian Palestinian groups,**
- **between Palestinian and Jewish groups in Canada, and**
- **between Palestinians and Israelis in Israel/Palestine (Identify groups within Israel and Palestine doing this kind of trust-building work, to facilitate possible partnerships between these groups and United Church bodies such as congregations, special interest groups or presbyteries.)**

**It further proposes that these resources be communicated to congregations, groups of interested United Church people, presbyteries and Conferences with encouragement for them to undertake this work.**

### **Background:**

The 41<sup>st</sup> General Council adopted the policies regarding peace in Israel/Palestine that call on the United Church to "identify the importance of trust-building programs between Palestinians and Israelis by: (a) encouraging stronger connections between United Church programs and organizations that build understanding between Palestinians and Israelis; and (b) exploring and supporting initiatives for increasing connections in Canada between Palestinian Canadians and Jewish Canadians".

Since the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council, the United Church has primarily focused on the boycott of goods produced in settlements, and has undertaken only limited work on trust-building programs. This has led to a deep rift in Jewish/United Church relations in Canada. Focusing on a punitive and disciplinary form of action may not properly reflect United Church roots of progressive activism and spirituality and the historic recognition of Canada as being a leader in productive and positive peaceful engagement.

More actively engaging in relationship-building will enable the church to live into the statement from the Policy of the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council that "The United Church expresses a hope and commitment to be able to contribute to justice, even in a small way, that leads to peace in Israel/Palestine." By focusing on creating opportunities that allow thoughtful engagement and positive solutions, the United Church can help to create a climate of positive engagement.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Received for information by Toronto Southeast Presbytery (March 17, 2015)

Given the financial implications posited, that General Council ensure that if it adopts this proposal, that its implications on the other work of the church be shared with all levels of The United Church of Canada

MOTION: that Toronto Southeast Presbytery add to the resolution the comment - that given the financial implications posited in the recommendation from Bedford Park United Church entitled "Relationship-building towards peace between Palestinians and Israelis", that General Council ensure that if it adopts this proposal that the implications for this proposal on the other work of the church be shared with all levels of the UCC. CARRIED.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

## **GCE 10 LIVING APOLOGY TO MEMBERS OF LGBTTQ COMMUNITIES**

**Origin: The Executive of the General Council**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council recommends that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- 1. Adopt the Process of a Living Apology as a vehicle for dialogue, story-telling, education and reconciliation with members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTTQ) community;**
- 2. Direct the General Secretary to partner with Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble on a Living Apology art installation project, an example of which is found in appendix A;**
- 3. Invite The United Church of Canada into a 3-year journey of dialogue and reconciliation with members of LGBTTQ communities, that would involve:**
  - creative opportunities for conversation, worship and education**
  - opportunities to explore concepts such as lament, reconciliation and justice, to be reported and celebrated at the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council (2018) in acknowledgement of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1988 decision of the full participation of LGBTTQ peoples in the church.**

### **Background**

At its meeting in November 2014 the Executive of General Council (GCE) asked the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry (PCPMM) to develop a process and wording for an apology to the LGBTTQ communities

After consultation with members of LGBTTQ communities, organizations, and various committees within the church about an apology, it was felt that it was not the right time for a formal apology. The collective wisdom was that we needed a longer process of dialogue, story-telling, and education. I am therefore proposing an apology process over the next triennium. By developing a 3-year process, communities of faith are given time to discern how they may live into an apology and what journeys need to be taken on a personal and communal level to create change, reconciliation and healing. In addition, the process seeks to ensure that as many voices as possible are heard, as there are unique and diverse stories from the community.

### **Invitation**

The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council in August 2015 would invite the church to engage in a three-year process of dialogue, reconciliation and education. The invitation would convey the importance of

listening to difficult stories, a willingness to learn and reflect, and the need to create change in the church.

This invitation could be offered in conjunction with opportunities to engage the General Council such as a learning option, a resource table made available throughout the meeting, or as a theme for a worship service.

### **Implementation**

One of the primary tools that would be used to engage in dialogue, story-telling, and education is an art-installation that would act as a “Living Apology”. (Additional information about the Living Apology is available in Appendix A below.)

Over the three-year process, resources would be developed to enable communities of faith to engage in courageous conversations around creating space for lament, storytelling, and fostering reconciliation. Furthermore, regional events will be offered to support this work and give members of the United Church from across the country a chance to participate in the Living Apology and participate in community building and workshops.

The United Church would also use social media and online resources to host conversations and offer online workshops.

### **Celebrations**

The three-year process would give the church an opportunity to best discern how to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1988 decision that all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, who profess faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to him, are welcome to be or become full members of the church. The findings of this process would be shared and celebrated at the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council in 2018.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Living Apology**

The Living Apology is an interactive art installation piece that gives participants an opportunity to hear the stories of others, contribute their own, and make their personal commitment to living into the apology. The Living Apology is structured as a spiral labyrinth design with three components.

#### **Component 1: Remembering/Story-telling**

The first section displays the stories of hurt/harm that has been caused by the church due to homophobia, transphobia, heterosexism, cissexism, and transmisogyny. Individuals will be invited to contribute their stories prior to the event, during their participation in the art installation, or afterwards (as they feel called to). Remembering and story-telling is an essential piece to an apology which enables people to feel heard and seen in their pain (that can often be silenced or surrounded by a sense of isolation). Not only does the collection of stories enable people to recognize they did not experience harm alone, it also helps the rest of the church



understand the complexity and multitudes of experiences members of LGBTTTQ communities have in the church.

### **Component 2: Accountability/Apology**

The second section would be featured in the centre of the spiral. The middle section of this journey invites participants to reflect on the role they have had perpetuating harm to members of LGBTTTQ communities and how they have benefitted from the injustice. This section would include the official words of the apology, but would also opportunities for individuals to write their own personal apologies, or for particular communities and/or organizations to share their own apologies as well (i.e. UCW, AOTS, GCO staff, Conference Office staff, Youth Forum, etc.). This section is important as it enables be to be healed from the apologies that have been offered by others without erasing the different forms of privilege which exists even within the LGBTTTQ spectrum (i.e., A gay person may be called to reflect on their participation in bi erasure, or a cis lesbian may be called to reflect on their cissexism).

### **Component 3: Hope/ Moving Forward**

The third section highlights the need for ongoing dedication and action to ensure the apology's transformative power is recognized. This section enables people to celebrate and affirm the many ways that members of LGBTTTQ communities and their alive have been resisting oppression and creating change before any major policies in the Church were implemented and before the apology. This section gives people an opportunity to share their experiences of joy and resilience. Also, this section provides an opportunity for people to share their hopes for how the apology will impact communities of faith across the country.

### **Method:**

The Living Apology is an ongoing art piece that would require a curator to answer any questions an individual may have about participating and ensure that the piece is maintained in a physical sense, but also that the any of the contributions ensure that they uphold the spirit of the apology.

### **Accessibility:**

- The inclusion of laptops with audio/visual stations would make the stories more accessible to those with visual impairment
- The art installation would have be constructed to reflect measurements that would enable someone to use a wheelchair or mobility device with ease throughout the installation.
- Due to the content material that would be discussed in the Living Apology, it would be important to have several chaplains available on site that had access to a private and comfortable place for pastoral care.

### **Preparation:**

- National call out for submission of stories, gathering stories from the GLBTT Consultation (2011), asking people to bring stories as commissioners from their communities,
- planning and creation of art installation base
- coordinating chaplains

### **Proposed Sharing of the Living Apology**

The Living Apology has the potential to be adapted and recreated by any community as a local

event (i.e. Conference AGM, youth gathering) by making some of the stories collected available through pdf documents/pictures.

A walking tour of the Living Apology could also be filmed and made available online for those who are unable to attend an event in person.

## **SK 8 SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT FOR PROGRESSIVE EVANGELICALS WITHIN THE EMERGING CHURCH MOVEMENT**

**Originating Body:** Intercultural Ministries Network of Saskatchewan Conference

**Financial Implications:** None; Potential property transfer or sale

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The Intercultural Ministries Network of Saskatchewan Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

- 1. send letters of support and solidarity to the Progressive Evangelical congregations in Canada and the United States who have made supportive statements of inclusion and welcome to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people within the last year.**
- 2. provide for ways and means for congregations who have made such statements and find themselves without a church building due to the denominational body withdrawing their support and property from the congregation, to enter into negotiations with United Church congregations that are closing or any congregations that are open to sharing their space. These negotiations, along with presbytery, could provide these progressive congregations with a building and explore ways for them to become a part of The United Church of Canada.**
- 3. explore the implications and possibilities of welcoming Progressive Evangelicals (including pastors who wish to be admitted) into The United Church of Canada as we move through this time of emergence in the church.**

### **Background:**

We are in a changing time in the church. Part of the Emergence that is happening is a movement of evangelical conservative (and fundamentalist) Christians moving away from their tradition and seeking a more progressive and inclusive theology. This includes congregations within evangelical conservative denominations (for example, Christ Church in Portland) as well as independent congregations (for example, GracePointe in Nashville) and church plants. As The United Church of Canada has a progressive theology and an inclusive policy toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members, we can offer support to these progressive evangelicals who may find this movement challenging and costly. Brian McLaren, Emerging Church leader, theologian and author, suggests that one way we could become more 'emerging' is for us to make church property from congregations that are closing available to some of these congregations who have been kicked out of their denomination because of their inclusive stance and have lost their buildings. The United Church of Canada has the potential to explore this and welcome these newly progressive Christians into our community.

The Marin Foundation and New Direction Ministry works with these congregations and can provide lists of congregations who have made inclusive statements and be a resource with regard to what congregations may be needing buildings for their ongoing ministry. There is also a newly forming Network of Progressive Evangelicals being established by Convergence US.

As we move through this time in the church, we need to be open to new ways of being church, of the convergence that is happening and work to be a part of it. This is one step toward doing that.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

## **BC 7 SUPPORT FOR A PROPORTIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE PARLIAMENT**

**Origin:** Kootenay Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Depends on rates of return of current investments and proposed reinvestments (the proposal could be financially advantageous or disadvantageous).

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- 1. Direct the Executive of the General Council to develop resources for congregations to understand and advocate for a proportionally representative federal parliament in Canada; and**
- 2. publicly endorse the campaign led by Fair Vote Canada to:**
  - a. conduct a citizen-led consultation process to determine the best model of proportional representation immediately following the next federal election, and**
  - b. implement the model in time for the following federal election.**

### **Background**

Canada remains one of few high-income countries to use the first-past-the-post system of electing representatives to its parliament. By consequence, democracy in Canada has descended into shambles: voter turnout remains low, especially among young Canadians; and, increasingly, public policy bears little resemblance of the wishes of the population. Conversely, a system of proportional representation has the potential to re-engage disenfranchised would-be voters; require legislators to work toward consensus; and ensure public opinion is reflected in public policy.

In the 2011 general election, the governing party earned 39% of the votes cast and 54% of the seats in parliament (in Alberta, 66% of the votes won 96% of the seats for one party; in Quebec 43% of the votes won 78% of the seats for another party). This allowed a single party to make every policy decision unilaterally since then. The 1997 general election generated similar results: 39% of the votes won 52% of the seats. In these “false majority” circumstances, the vast majority of Canadians are not represented fairly in Parliament. Since World War I, there have been 16 majority governments elected; only 4 of those received more than half of the popular vote. The other 12 majority governments since World War I have been “false majorities.” According to Fair Vote Canada, approximately 7,000,000 votes (~50%) have no influence in the make-up of Parliament. Voters are justified in feeling disenfranchised.

A fairer methodology, a system of proportional representation, would see a party that wins 39% of the vote occupying 39% of the seats in Parliament. Twenty-five of the 31 countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) govern by coalition governments elected by proportional representation, allowing public policy to land much closer to the median voters' views. Proportional representation correlates to lower income inequality, stronger environmental standards, and higher representation of women and visible minorities among governing bodies.

According to a poll in April 2013, 70% of Canadians support proportional representation. Thirteen years of public opinion polls show strong support from voters of each of the major parties. Proportional representation has been recommended by ten assemblies and commissions in Canada. Both BC and Ontario held referenda to determine whether to transition to a specific system of proportional representation. In both cases, citizens' assemblies came out strongly supporting proportional representation, despite members of the assemblies generally feeling only lukewarm toward proportional representation at the outset of their study. The resolution passed in neither jurisdiction, largely because few voters understand the systems proposed and while proportional representation itself was widely supported, voters disagreed on the specific type of proportional representation.

Christians have a duty to advocate for strong democracies. The level of oppression against which Jesus advocated during his life was possible because robust democracy was absent. Jesus' execution was conducted without a fair judicial system, largely because of the absence of robust democracy. In the absence of robust democracy, power and wealth concentrate in the hands of few and corporations assume a greater influence over public policy than they should. Robust democracy depends on a robust system of electing representatives. Canada could have a fair electoral system and a robust democracy that could withstand future challenges if Canadians generate sufficient political will for such a change.

The United Church of Canada could contribute to a fair electoral system and a robust democracy by supporting Fair Vote Canada's initiative as reflected in the motion (above) and by developing materials for congregations to understand proportional representation and its various models. The United Church of Canada is uniquely positioned to connect theology, democracy, and justice such that members and adherents of pastoral charges could better understand proportional representation.

About Fair Vote Canada: "Fair Vote Canada (FVC) is a grassroots multi-partisan citizens' campaign for voting system reform. We promote the introduction of an element of proportional representation into elections for all levels of government and throughout civil society." (Fair Vote Canada 2013. <http://www.fairvote.ca/about-fair-voting/> Accessed 15 March 2015).

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

## **ANW 1 NUCLEAR WEAPONS-FREE WORLD: A CALL FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONVENTION**

**Origin:** Parkdale United Church, Calgary Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:** General Secretary, General Council Office, The United Church of Canada

**The Parkdale United Church proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) to direct the General Secretary, General Council, to call upon the Government of Canada to urgently:**

- a. Call upon the United States and Russia to reduce the alert status of their nuclear weapons; and**
- b. Publicly affirm its willingness to engage in negotiations for a Nuclear Weapons Convention or an equivalent framework of agreements.**

**Background:**

**Observant** of the Biblical call, “that I have set before your life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live ...”(Deuteronomy 30:20), and that, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:31);

**Concerned** by our knowledge of the 16,300 nuclear weapons on this Earth;

**Distressed** that roughly 2,000 of these weapons are “on alert”, thus capable of being used in under 30 minutes;

**Alarmed** at the knowledge that the smoke from firestorms from even a small exchange of nuclear weapons could trigger climate change adequate to cause a nuclear famine;

**Aware** that 190 states agreed in 1968 to “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race ...”;

**Concerned** that multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament have not begun;

**Grateful** for the 2010 unanimous motion of Canada’s Senate and House of Commons that “encourage[s] the Government of Canada to engage in negotiations for a nuclear weapons convention as proposed by the United Nations Secretary-General” and “to deploy a major world-wide Canadian diplomatic initiative in support of preventing nuclear proliferation and increasing the rate of nuclear disarmament; and

**Reassured** by Canada’s support for the 2014 Inter-Parliamentary Union’s resolution, entitled, “Toward a Nuclear Weapon-Free World: The Contribution of Parliaments”, that

“recommends that parliaments urge their governments to start negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention or on a package of agreements to help achieve a nuclear weapon-free world ...”

**Sources:**

Nuclear Forces, published by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

Status of World Nuclear Forces, by Federation of American Scientists

Deadly Climate Change from Nuclear War: A Threat to Human Existence, by Steven Starr

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Article 6

Motion passed unanimously by the Senate of Canada (June 2, 2010) and the House of Commons (December 7, 2010)

Toward a Nuclear Weapon-Free-World: The Contribution of Parliaments, Resolution adopted by consensus by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, March 20, 2014

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Parkdale United Church, Calgary, to the Local and Global Outreach Commission of Calgary Presbytery.

Transmitted with concurrence by the Local and Global Outreach Commission of Calgary Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.



## **TOR 8 URGING ISRAEL, PAKISTAN, INDIA AND NORTH KOREA TO SIGN NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)**

**Origin: Social Justice and World Affairs Committee, South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Financial Implications if known:** To be done by existing staff and volunteers

**Staffing Implications if known:** To be done by existing staff

**Source of Funding if known:** Unknown

**The Social Justice and World Affairs Committee, South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of General Council to:**

- 1) Urge the Canadian government to advocate through appropriate diplomatic and other channels that Israel, Pakistan, India and North Korea both sign and implement the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty;**
- 2) Recognizing limited capacity, develop a program within The United Church of Canada to nurture such advocacy; and**
- 3) Share the background and goals of this proposal with ecumenical and interfaith partners.**

### **Background**

Non-Proliferation Treaty review conferences are held every five years, and there is one April 27th – May 22nd, 2015.

There are four nuclear-armed states that have not signed the NPT: Israel, Pakistan, India, North Korea. Canada has a close relationship with Israel, and may be able to influence Israel as a result.

Five nuclear-armed states have signed the treaty and they are the permanent members of the Security Council: United States, Russia, France, United Kingdom, China.

December 3, 2014 <http://www.ibtimes.com/israel-should-declare-nuclear-weapons-sign-non-proliferation-treaty-un-1732435> “The United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday criticized Israel for failing to join the international non-proliferation treaty and urged it to renounce its arsenal of nuclear weapons. The U.N. also approved a resolution, introduced by Egypt and backed by all Arab nations, calling on Israel to place its nuclear facilities under international oversight. ... The U.N. General Assembly reportedly said that Israel, which has so far refused to officially admit to having nuclear weapons, is the only country in the Middle East that has not ratified the NPT, and urged it to ‘accede to that treaty without further delay ... not to develop, produce test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons, to renounce possession of nuclear weapons.’ The U.N. resolution, which is largely symbolic and is not legally binding, was adopted after 161

nations voted in its favor. Five countries, including the U.S., Canada and Israel, voted against it while 18 countries abstained.”

Richard Falk and David Krieger: *“The NPT contains a long-standing and well-understood requirement for good faith negotiations to achieve nuclear disarmament. . . . There are no good faith negotiations at the moment, nor are there any on the horizon. It appears by now beyond doubt that the main nuclear weapon states, and not just the US, remain opposed, or at best indifferent, to nuclear disarmament, and seem reluctant to bring the issue close to the surface of public awareness.”*(p. 7)

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion in 1996: *“ . . . the court was unanimous when it came to the NPT obligation to negotiate disarmament, concluding ‘There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control’ ”*(p xvi) Further, Judge Weeramantry of ICJ Advisory Opinion on legality of nuclear weapons 1996, goes beyond Article VI which obliges nations merely to pursue negotiations on nuclear disarmament, the court deemed that such negotiations *must be concluded* (xvii). Falk states that the NPT legal obligation *“clearly intended to push the nuclear weapon states much beyond arms control or the freeze movement. . . . States were and are legally required to seek general and complete disarmament, which is to address the war system as such, and to take seriously the promise of the UN Charter preamble ‘to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.’ ”* (p. 45) Falk, Richard and Krieger, David eds (2008). *At the Nuclear Precipice: Catastrophe or Transformation?*

There have been a number of articles calling attention to increasing danger of actual use of nuclear weapons. First, NATO forces surrounding China and Russia, Obama’s allocation of \$1.1tn for nuclear weapons development, the collapse of a number of Middle East states and the desperation of sectarian conflicts, missile defence development in Israel and in the US making “first strike” more feasible. Indeed, Seymour Hersh ends his 1991 book on Israel stating *“The Samson Option (the suicidal consequences of a nuclear attack) is no longer the only nuclear option available to Israel”* – Israel could “safely” launch a nuclear attack. Helen Caldicott organized a symposium in New York Feb. 28-March 1, 2015 because of the increasing threats of nuclear war (reports by Steven Starr, Bruce Gagnon, Theodore Postel, Alice Slater, and others). Gordon Edwards, Canadian expert on nuclear weapons: *“Nothing does more to destroy trust than undermining the entire concept of arms control treaties by the unilateral and unjustified abrogation of such a solemn agreement by one party without the consent of the other parties to that treaty. Yet that is what the USA did by unilaterally withdrawing from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, commonly known as the ABM Treaty -- an agreement that many regarded as a cornerstone of nuclear deterrence during the Cold War period. Uncontrolled development of ABM systems could create the impression that a successful nuclear “first strike” is possible, even planned, thereby pushing an adversary to consider launching a preemptive nuclear first strike of its own as well as heightening the likelihood of an accidental nuclear war sparked by nuclear jitters. ”*

From the NPT Action Plan Monitoring Report March 2015 Reaching Critical Will (RCW) is the disarmament programme of the [Women's International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)](#),

the oldest women's peace organization in the world. *“All States parties commit to pursue policies that are fully compatible with the Treaty and the objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons. All NPT nuclear-armed states and their nuclear-dependent allies continue to include nuclear weapons in security doctrines and policies. e nuclear-armed states are also engaged in or are planning for modernization of their nuclear weapons and related systems and facilities, extending the lives of their arsenals indefinitely. Neither is compatible with the NPT’s letter or spirit. If action 1 is to be implemented, modernization programmes must stop and the nuclear-armed states and those involved in nuclear-armed alliances must remove the role of nuclear weapons from their respective security doctrines and policies.”*

“Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty requires the United States as a nuclear power to: *‘pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control’*. ... *“The United States also provides more than \$4 billion in military and economic aid to the state of Israel although Israel refuses to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, or allow outside inspectors, and does not deny that it possesses a considerable arsenal of nuclear weapons. We are not aware of any call by U.S. officials insisting that Israel sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or begin liquidating its own nuclear arsenal.”* Brian Becker, National Director of the ANSWER Coalition. [http://www.answercoalition.org/what\\_could\\_crash\\_a\\_u\\_s\\_iran\\_agreement](http://www.answercoalition.org/what_could_crash_a_u_s_iran_agreement)

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Received by South West Presbytery (April 18, 2015) and passed on to Toronto Conference with concurrence.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

## **TOR 7 ARMS TRADE TREATY**

**Origin: Community Connections and Right Relations Commission, Living Waters  
Presbytery, Toronto Conference**

**Financial Implications if known:** Nil

**Staffing Implications if known:** Nil

**Source of Funding if known:** Nil

**The Community Connections and Right Relations Commission of Living Waters  
Presbytery, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

- a. contact the prime minister and appropriate ministers calling on them to sign and enable the ratification of the global Arms Trade Treaty that Canada voted for at the United Nations General Assembly on April 2, 2013; and**
- b. contact the party leaders urging them to call on the Government of Canada to bring the Arms Trade Treaty to the House of Commons so that it can be ratified; and**
- c. contact the prime minister, party leaders and appropriate ministers to express disappointment that Canada is now blocked from participating in the founding meetings of states parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (which will set up a secretariat and other mechanisms for monitoring implementation and elaboration of the treaty) because Canada had not signed and ratified the Treaty when it came into effect on December 24, 2014.**

### **Background**

On April 2, 2013, the United Nations General Assembly approved by an overwhelming majority vote a historic global Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Only three UN states – Iran, North Korea and Syria – voted against it. The treaty is a milestone victory for the UN. More importantly, it is a new instrument of hope for the millions of people and thousands of communities across the world suffering from or threatened by armed violence. Properly implemented, the treaty will indeed “reduce human suffering.”

The treaty enshrines in new international law a set of clear rules for cross-border transfers of weapons and ammunition. It creates binding obligations for governments to assess arms transfers to ensure that weapons will not be used for human rights abuses, terrorism, transnational organized crime or violations of humanitarian law. It requires that governments refuse any transfer of weapons if there is a significant risk that they will be used to violate human rights or commit war crimes.

The treaty was the result of a negotiation process that by United Nations’ standards was remarkably short (less than seven years). It is a once-in-a-generation achievement. The UN has not agreed to a major treaty to control conventional weapons since the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (sometimes called the Inhumane Weapons Treaty). With the

ATT, the UN has demonstrated that it still can provide meaningful action on its core mandate: to build peace and prevent war.

**Ratification and Implementation of the treaty:** The Arms Trade Treaty can enter into force 90 days after 50 states have ratified it. On December 24, 2014, the treaty entered into force with the required number of ratifications.

As of the writing of this proposal (March 2015), the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs reports that 130 States have now signed the treaty and 63 have ratified it.

Unfortunately, although Canada voted for the treaty at the United Nations, Canada has still not signed or taken steps to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty. It can still sign and then ratify it at any time in the future.

Because Canada missed the deadline of Dec. 24 2014 when the ATT came into force, Canada cannot participate in the founding meetings of states parties to the Arms Trade Treaty which will set up a secretariat and other mechanisms for monitoring implementation and elaboration of the treaty.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Received for information by Living Waters Presbytery (March 10, 2015) and passed on to Toronto Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

## **ANW 2 ONE DEATH PER MINUTE: CALL FOR CANADIAN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ARMS TRADE TREATY**

**Origin:** Parkdale United Church, Calgary Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:** General Secretary, General Council Office, The United Church of Canada

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Parkdale United Church proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council, to hereby call upon the Government of Canada to sign, ratify and implement the Arms Trade Treaty.**

### **Background:**

**Mindful** of the Biblical imperative that, “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13), and that we should, “Do unto others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31);

**Heartened** to note the success of citizens in Ireland, Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, and Hiroshima in reconstructing after warfare and building more peaceful relations among their people;

**Deeply concerned** that at least 500,000 people die every year - at a rate of one death per minute - and millions more are displaced and abused as a result of armed violence and conflict;

**Aware** that the trade in arms traps civilians in situations of armed violence, in settings of both crime and conflict, and in conditions of poverty;

**Noting** the concerns of the United Nations with the consequences of the arms trade on civilians in conflict zones, including, disruption of humanitarian and development organizations due to attacks on staff, and threats to peace keeping and peace-building operations;

**Concerned** that the Government of Canada persists in approving exports to states such as Brazil, Columbia, India, Israel, Kenya, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey and Yemen, countries which host armed conflict and/or serious human rights violations;

**Noting** the new Arms Trade Treaty would prohibit states from transferring conventional weapons to countries where they know these weapons would be used to commit or facilitate genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, or be used for serious violations of international humanitarian or human rights laws;

**Grateful** that Canada voted in favour of approving the text of the Arms Trade Treaty in 2013; but

**Concerned** that Canada has failed to sign and ratify the Treaty.

**Sources:**

Global Burden of Armed Violence 2011 - Drawing on comprehensive country-level data, including both conflict-related and criminal violence, it estimates that at least 526,000 people die violently every year, more than three-quarters of them in non-conflict settings.

Canada holds off on arms trace treaty even after US has signed, The Canadian Press, September 25, 2013

Canada's arms exports, New report reflects old habits that fall short of the transparency standards of the Arms Trade Treaty, by Kenneth Epps

The Ploughshares Monitor, Summer 2014, wherein they cite their sources to include Project Ploughshares' Armed Conflicts Report, US State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Parkdale United Church, Calgary, to the Local and Global Outreach Commission of Calgary Presbytery

Transmitted with concurrence by the Local and Global Outreach Commission of Calgary Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

## **HAM 1 SETTING THE DATE FOR A CONGREGATION OR PASTORAL CHARGE MEETING**

**Origin:** Waterloo Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:** none

**Source of Funding if known:** none

**Waterloo Presbytery proposes that the 42nd General Council (2015):**

**approve a change in policy so that the convener of the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee shall determine a date for a meeting of a congregation or pastoral charge when the purpose of that meeting is to consider a change in pastoral relations,**

**In setting the date, the convener shall ensure that:**

- a) Proper notice of meeting can be given, as stipulated in The Manual B.5.4.2.a; and**
- b) At least one representative of those who have requested the meeting will be able to attend the meeting to present reasons for a change in pastoral relations; and**
- c) The ministry personnel settled in or appointed to the local ministry unit have an opportunity to speak at the meeting about the proposed change; and to respond to any questions asked or comments made about the ministry personnel or the pastoral relationship, as is required in The Manual I.3.1.4.c; and**

**Effort shall be made to hold the meeting within 30 days after the date on which the written request for the meeting was received. The meeting may not proceed if there are circumstances which, in the opinion of the Pastoral Relations Convener, make it difficult or impossible to honour the minister's right to be heard.**

### **Background:**

1. The United Church Manual (2013) states that a meeting of a congregation or pastoral charge must be called when written request has been received from:
  - (i) the governing body; or
  - (ii) 10 full members of the congregation or pastoral charge.

Also, the Manual stipulates that

*"The meeting must be held within 15 days of receiving the request."*

[The Manual B.5.3.3.a]



2. The Manual stipulates how notice must be given for a congregation or pastoral charge meeting.

If the purpose of the meeting is to consider a pastoral relations matter,

- a) *“Before giving notice to the congregation or pastoral charge, the person calling the meeting must give notice to the secretary of the presbytery and to the ministry personnel settled in or appointed to the pastoral charge.”*
  - b) *“Notice of the meeting must be read during public worship on two Sundays. After notice has been read on the second Sunday, the meeting may take place on the next day(Monday) or on any day after that.”* [The Manual B.5.4.2.a]
3. The requirement for the meeting to be held within 15 days, and the requirement for proper notice of at least 2 Sundays, together create a limited “time window” within which the meeting must be held. Depending on when the written request is received, this “time window” can be as wide as 6 days and as narrow as 1 day (see the charts at the end of the proposal).
  4. A meeting called to initiate a change in pastoral relations *“must be chaired by the chair of the presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee or someone appointed by that chair.”* [The Manual I.3.1.4.b] Depending on factors such as availability of potential chairpersons, the time of year, and size of the “time window,” it can be challenging to find someone to chair the meeting. This could make it difficult to have the meeting within the required time.
  5. At a meeting called to initiate a change in pastoral relations, *“the ministry personnel settled in or appointed to the pastoral charge must be given an opportunity*
    - (i) *to speak about the proposed change; and*
    - (ii) *to respond to any questions asked or comments made about the ministry personnel or the pastoral relationship. The ministry personnel is entitled to this opportunity before the pastoral charge votes to request a change in pastoral relations.”* [The Manual I.3.1.4.c]
  6. Potentially the required “time window” for a meeting coincide with when one or more ministry personnel are on an approved vacation, study leave, or sabbatical leave. This could deprive the ministry personnel of their opportunity to speak and respond, and the congregation or pastoral charge of the opportunity to consider their response(s) in making its decision.
  7. A request to consider a change in pastoral relations can arise at a time when the level of conflict in a congregation or pastoral charge is significant. Also, such a request can be part of a pattern of vexatious behaviour toward ministry personnel. In such an environment, the limited “time window” can become an occasion for further harm.
  8. Allowing the convenor of the presbytery’s pastoral relations committee to determine the date of the meeting makes the decision the responsibility of a neutral person who can consider the specific context and factors involved.

Under current provisions:

**Widest Window Possible = 7 days; when the request for the meeting is received on a Saturday**

| Sun                              | Mon                          | Tue                           | Wed                           | Thu                           | Fri                           | Sat                           |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                                  |                              |                               |                               |                               |                               | Request received              |
| Day 1<br>Notice in<br>worship #1 | Day 2                        | Day 3                         | Day 4`                        | Day 5`                        | Day 6`                        | Day 7                         |
| Day 8<br>Notice in<br>worship #2 | Day 9<br>Meeting<br>possible | Day 10<br>Meeting<br>possible | Day 11<br>Meeting<br>possible | Day 12<br>Meeting<br>possible | Day 13<br>Meeting<br>possible | Day 14<br>Meeting<br>possible |
| Day 15<br>Meeting<br>possible    |                              |                               |                               |                               |                               |                               |

**Narrowest Window Possible = 1 day; it is when the request for the meeting is received on a Sunday**

| Sun                                 | Mon                           | Tue   | Wed    | Thu    | Fri    | Sat    |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Request received                    | Day 1                         | Day 2 | Day 3  | Day 4  | Day 5  | Day 6  |
| Day 7 –<br>Notice in<br>worship #1  | Day 8                         | Day 9 | Day 10 | Day 11 | Day 12 | Day 13 |
| Day 14 –<br>Notice in<br>worship #2 | Day 15<br>Meeting<br>possible |       |        |        |        |        |

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Concurrence from Hamilton Conference

### **HAM 3 CHANGING STRUCTURE OF A GOVERNING BODY**

**Origin:** Waterloo Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** none

**Staffing Implications if known:** none

**Source of Funding if known:** n/a

**Waterloo Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) approve a change in policy to allow a congregation or pastoral charge to change the structure of its governing body, as long as the new structure meets the requirements for a governing body in The Manual (B.7.2). The congregation will inform the presbytery of any changes in a timely manner, and the presbytery may choose to direct or recommend changes as part of its role of overseeing pastoral charges.**

#### **Background:**

1. The explanatory notes in The Manual provide guidance about how a congregation or pastoral charge can structure its governing body [The Manual (2013) B.7.2]. The notes state:
  - *“The governing body may take any shape the congregation or pastoral charge chooses, with the approval of the presbytery. For example, a very small congregation may choose to have the entire membership of the congregation serve as the governing body.”*
  - *“The congregation or pastoral charge works with the presbytery to set up the structure of its governing body. The following three structures are common:
 
    - (a) the Session/Stewards/Official Board model;
    - (b) a unified board model, called the Church Board; and
    - (c) a council structure, called the Church Council.

*A congregation or pastoral charge that has one of these structures may continue with it. The presbytery’s approval is not required.”**
  - *“It [the congregation or pastoral charge] may also make changes to its structure or decide on a new structure as long as the new structure meets the requirements of section B.7.2 above, including presbytery approval.”*
2. The previous version of The Manual stipulated that presbytery approval is required only when a congregation wishes to establish a form of organization different from *the Session/Stewards/Official Board model, or the Church Board model, or the Church Council model*. [The Manual (2010) s.279]
3. The rewriting of The Manual, effective in 2013, therefore broadened the scope of requirement for presbytery’s approval. This makes it more difficult for a congregation to

transition from one time-honoured model to another as its needs and circumstances change. It also increases the workload of presbyteries and their committees responsible for considering such changes.

4. The broad authority given to presbyteries to oversee pastoral charges gives the presbytery adequate authority to ensure that the structure for a congregation or pastoral charge's governing body complies with the requirements in The Manual. [The Manual (2013) B.7.2

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence

### **BLUE 3 COMPOSITE: QUORUM**

**Originating Body:** Blue Commission

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

**Direct and authorize the Executive of the General Council to review and amend, or remove, the policy regarding quorum requirements for meetings of the congregation and the governing body (B.5.5 and B.7.7.4).**

**Background:**

This composite combines HAM 2, LON 19 and LON 20.

## **HAM 2 QUORUM FOR A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF A CONGREGATION OR PASTORAL CHARGE**

**Origin:** Waterloo Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** none

**Staffing Implications if known:** none

**Source of Funding if known:** n/a

**Waterloo Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) approve a change in policy to allow a congregation or pastoral charge to determine the quorum required for meetings of its governing body, provide that the requirement meets or exceeds that in the current policy [The Manual (2013) B.7.7.4]**

### **Background:**

1. The United Church Manual (2013) states that a meeting of a congregation or pastoral charge's Local Ministry Unit's "*governing body may take place only if a minimum number of members is present, as follows:*
  - (i) *For a governing body that has fewer than 60 members, at least 1/3 of them must be present.*
  - (ii) *For a governing body that has 60 or more members, at least 20 members must be present.* [The Manual B.7.7.4]
2. A quorum serves as "*protection against totally unrepresentative action in the name of the body by an unduly small number of persons.*" [Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th edition (2011), p. 21; while the United Church follows Bourinot's Rules of Order, this definition effectively expresses the purpose of establishing a quorum.]
3. The size of governing bodies in the United Church can vary widely. Some can be quite large (60+ members). Others can be small (5-10 members).
4. The current threshold for a governing body's quorum can create a situation where a very small number can act as the governing body. This is illustrated in the following examples.
  - i) If the governing body is 10 members, then 4 are needed for quorum. A motion can pass with 2 supporting it (with the chair not voting). This is just 20% of the governing body.
  - ii) If the governing body is 15 members, then 5 are needed for quorum. A motion can pass with 3 supporting it (with the chair not voting). Again, this is just 20% of the governing body.
  - iii) If the governing body is 40 members, then 14 are needed for quorum. A motion can pass with 7 supporting it (with the chair not voting). This is only 18% of the governing body.
  - iv) If the governing body is 80 members, then 20 are needed for quorum. A motion can pass with as few as 10 supporting it (13% of the governing body).

5. Because of this, situations can arise where a governing body can take formally valid actions which, in practice, lack legitimacy.
6. Granting a congregation or pastoral charge the power to raise the quorum requirement for it's governing body can address this problem.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence

## **LON 19 ACHIEVING A QUORUM FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS IN THE AGE OF SHRINKING MEMBERSHIP PARTICIPATION**

**Origin:** Kerwood-Bethesda United Church Council, Middlesex Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** Unknown

**The Kerwood-Bethesda United Church Council proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Direct the Executive of the General Council to amend Manual (2013) Section B.5.5 Quorum—Minimum Number of Members Present as follows:**

**A meeting of the congregation or pastoral charge may take place only if a minimum number of full members is present, as follows:**

- (a) For congregations or pastoral charges with ~~60~~ 100 or more full members, at least 20 full members must be present.**
- (b) For congregations or pastoral charges with fewer than ~~60~~ 100 full members, at least ~~1/3 of the full membership~~ 10 full members must be present.**

### **Background:**

That the requirement for a quorum for meetings of small congregations with fewer than 100 members be reduced to 10 members rather than the current 20. It is becoming increasingly difficult to attain the required quorum numbers for small congregations. A congregation of 600 people and a congregation of 60 people are required to have 20 people to achieve a legal meeting. It is far easier for the large congregation to attain those numbers. Both large and small congregations have members that do not or will not participate in the decision process involved with running a church. In small congregations this becomes problematic as there is a significantly smaller number of people willing to attend meetings. As congregations age there becomes an even smaller group of individuals that are able to attend such meetings.

Producing a more accurate membership role in order to have the church number fall into the appropriate category has proven to be difficult. Families tend to want their children or grandchildren to remain on the membership role, even though they are no longer living in the area (gone to school) or no longer participating in the faith community. To remove such members to more accurately reflect the active membership would and has caused tension within the church and between members for even suggesting such an action.

We propose, for smaller congregations with fewer than 100 people, that quorum requirement be reduced to 10 members.

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**Intermediate Court Action:**

Middlesex Presbytery endorses the proposal as circulated with the recommendation of the following addition:

c) with congregations or pastoral charges with fewer than 30 full members at least 1/3 of the full membership must be present

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 20 QUORUM REQUIREMENTS FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS**

**Origin:** Algoma Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** n/a

**Staffing Implications if known:** General Council

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Algoma Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to review and amend, or remove, the policy regarding quorum requirements for annual congregational meetings.**

### **Background:**

At the 2014 Annual Meeting of the St. Joseph Island Pastoral Charge, a motion was passed requesting that General Council review and consider removing the rules concerning quorum requirements for annual congregational meetings.

Both congregations in this two-point northern rural charge have been forced to reschedule annual meetings because they have been unable to meet The Manual (Section B. 5.5) requirements. Weather, geography, and an aging constituency are all contributing factors.,

As well, each congregation has a number of adherents who are faithful attendees and supporters of the life and work of the church but who for various reasons choose not to become full members. These people often attend the meetings but are not able to be included in the count to attain quorum.

There are a number of members who support the churches but who do not attend either services or meetings. We know that St. Joseph Island Pastoral Charge is not alone in this difficulty; we also know that many congregations consider quorum to be the members attending the meeting the day it is held.

The strictness of the definition of quorum inhibits congregations from conducting the business of the church, while remaining faithful to the call to be open, welcoming and inclusive places of community and worship.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 21 CONTINUATION OF UNSETTLING GOODS CAMPAIGN**

**Origin:** Division of World Outreach, Middlesex Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** We recommend this work to be made a priority for staffing

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission and Service

**Volunteer Implications:** United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel would continue their active animation of this campaign

**The Division of World Outreach, Middlesex Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) mandates the allocation of adequate General Council Office resources for the continued implementation of the United Church of Canada Unsettling Goods campaign until a just peace is achieved in Palestine/Israel.**

### **Background:**

- The “Unsettling Goods” Campaign is The United Church of Canada’s response to and implementation of the resolution on Palestine/Israel which passed with a strong majority at the 41st General Council meeting in August 2012 <http://www.gc41.ca/israel-and-palestine-policy-report> and is in line with United Church Social Policy Positions – The Working Group on Israel/Palestine Policy (2012) <http://www.united-church.ca/beliefs/policies/2012/w536>
- We commend the General Council Office staff, elected members, as well as United Church members and friends for the implementation to date of the Unsettling Goods campaign
- To honour the call of our Palestinian Christian partners (as in the Kairos Palestine document), more time is needed for consciousness raising, education and communication across the United Church on this issue. Continuing courageous conversations can help inform our analysis and strengthen our faithfulness.
- The economic action part of the campaign is a non-violent response to the call of United Church of Canada’s global partners in the region and reflects a core biblical value that “peace requires justice”.
- The “Unsettling Goods” campaign is a response focused not at Israel itself, but only against those products made in the illegal Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.
- The latest news from the region shows an aggressive increase in both illegal settlement construction and demolition of Palestinian houses by the Israeli military.
- There is evidence that global pressure (and economic action) to end the occupation is having an impact. Keeping pressure on could more quickly lead to just peace. The campaign encourages modest justice-seeking consumer choices (economic action against products made in the illegal Israeli settlements) that aim to help end the occupation and lay the foundation for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.
- As a non-violent response to the disproportionate violence being experienced daily by Palestinians, the “Unsettling Goods” Campaign should be continued until the illegal occupation ends or until a more effective response is identified.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Middlesex Presbytery: transmit with concurrence (Feb 24, 2015)

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **LON 24 ROLE OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY IN LEGITIMIZING ISRAELI PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES**

**Origin:** Social Justice Division of London Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Social Justice Division of London Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to implement item 8 of the GC41 Israel/Palestine Policy adopted by the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council, specifically:**

- 1. Address the critical role that some forms of Christian theology have played in legitimizing the occupation by:**
  - a. challenging Christian beliefs that theologically justify the occupation and Israel's possession of a greater Israel that includes the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza;**
  - b. requesting that the Theology and InterChurch InterFaith Committee explore the implications of theologies and beliefs that support the occupation.**

### **Background:**

A report of the above action mandated by the General Council in the adopted resolution of the Working group on Israel/Palestine Policy has not been produced.

A conference was organized by Canadian Friends of Sabeel and co-sponsored by The United Church of Canada, the Anglican Church of Canada and the Presbyterian Church in Canada in May 2015 on the history and theology of Christian Zionism in Canada and the U.S. and on how its manifestations represent a barrier to peace in the Middle East.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5 – 7, 2015

## **MAR 1 CONTINUATION OF UNSETTLING GOODS CAMPAIGN**

**Origin:** Church in Action Committee, of PEI Presbytery, Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** If current program is continued, financial implications should not significantly increase over current spending

**Staffing Implications if known:** We recommend this work to be made a priority for staffing.

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission and Service

**Volunteer Implications:** United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel would continue their active animation of this Campaign

### **Maritime Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to provide allocation of adequate General Council Office (GCO) resources for the continued implementation of The United Church of Canada Unsettling Goods campaign until the rise of 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council in 2018.**

#### **Background:**

- The “Unsettling Goods” Campaign is The United Church of Canada’s response to and implementation of the General Council resolution on Palestine/Israel which passed with a strong majority at the 41st General Council meeting in August 2012
- We commend the General Council Office staff, elected members, as well as United Church members and friends for the implementation to date of the Unsettling Goods campaign
- To honour the call of our Palestinian Christian partners (as found in the Kairos Palestine document), more time is needed for consciousness raising, education and communication across the United Church on this complex issue. Continuing courageous conversations can help inform our analysis and strengthen our faithfulness.
- The campaign encourages church members and supporters to pray, choose and speak to help end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and includes resources for worship and study, ethical tours of the Holy Land, trust-building programs between Israelis and Palestinians, support for Palestinian livelihoods by purchasing fair trade products such as Zatoun olive oil and planting olive trees, and avoiding purchasing products made in the illegal Israeli settlements.
- The economic action part of the “Unsettling Goods” campaign is a non-violent response to the call of United Church of Canada’s global partners in the region and reflects a core biblical value that “peace requires justice”.
- The “Unsettling Goods” economic action campaign is a response focused not at Israel itself, but only against those products made in the illegal Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.
- The latest news from the region shows an aggressive increase in both illegal settlement construction and demolition of Palestinian houses by the Israeli military.
- There is evidence that global pressure (including economic action) to end the occupation is having an impact. Keeping the pressure on could more quickly lead to just peace. The “Unsettling Goods” campaign encourages modest justice-seeking consumer choices

(economic action against products made in the illegal Israeli settlements) that aim to help end the occupation and lay the foundation for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.

- As a non-violent response to the disproportionate violence being experienced daily by Palestinians, the “Unsettling Goods” Campaign should be continued until the illegal occupation ends or until a more effective response is identified.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett / Sean Handcock moved that the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposals #1 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign”, #3 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign”, and #7 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign” to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **MAR 3 CONTINUATION OF UNSETTLING GOODS CAMPAIGN**

**Origin:** Church in Action Committee, of Halifax Presbytery, Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications if Known:** If current program is continued, financial implications should not significantly increase over current spending

**Staffing Implications if Known:** We recommend this work to be made a priority for staffing.

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission and Service

**Volunteer Implications:** United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel would continue their active animation of this campaign

**Proposed by the Church in Action Committee of Halifax Presbytery, Maritime Conference that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) directs the Executive of the General mandates the allocation of adequate General Council Office resources for the continued implementation of The United Church of Canada Unsettling Goods campaign until the occupation, as defined by the 4<sup>th</sup> Geneva Convention, has come to an end.**

#### **Theological Rationale:**

There is a strong biblical call to seek justice throughout the New Testament and parts of the old testament. We see God's call to justice clearly articulated in Micah 6:8 "What does the Lord require of you but to seek justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God." We also see it in Jesus' sermon on the Mount "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9)

#### **Background:**

- The "Unsettling Goods" Campaign is The United Church of Canada's response to and implementation of the resolution on Palestine/Israel which passed with a strong majority at the 41st General Council meeting in August 2012
- We commend the General Council Office staff, elected members, as well as United Church members and friends for the implementation to date of the Unsettling Goods campaign
- To honour the call of our Palestinian Christian partners (as found in the Kairos Palestine document), more time is needed for consciousness raising, education and communication across the United Church on this complex issue. Continuing courageous conversations can help inform our analysis and strengthen our faithfulness.
- The campaign encourages church members and supporters to pray, choose and speak to help end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and includes resources for worship and study, ethical tours of the Holy Land, trust-building programs between Israelis and Palestinians, support for Palestinian livelihoods by purchasing fair trade products such as Zatoun olive oil and planting olive trees, and avoiding purchasing products made in the illegal\* Israeli settlements.

- The economic action part of the “Unsettling Goods” campaign is a non-violent response to the call of United Church of Canada’s global partners in the region and reflects a core biblical value that “peace requires justice”.
- The “Unsettling Goods” economic action campaign is a response focused not at Israel itself, but only against those products made in the illegal Israeli settlements\* on Palestinian land.
- The latest news from the region shows an aggressive increase in both illegal\* settlement construction and demolition of Palestinian houses by the Israeli military.
- There is evidence that global pressure (including economic action) to end the occupation is having an impact. Keeping the pressure on could more quickly lead to just peace. The “Unsettling Goods” campaign encourages modest justice-seeking consumer choices (economic action against products made in the illegal Israeli settlements) that aim to help end the occupation and lay the foundation for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.
- As a non-violent response to the disproportionate violence being experienced daily by Palestinians, the “Unsettling Goods” Campaign should be continued until the illegal occupation ends or until a more effective response is identified.

#### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett / Sean Handcock moved that the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposals #1 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign”, #3 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign”, and #7 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign” to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada.

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

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\* The Fourth Geneva Convention is an international law that forbids an occupying power from moving its own people into areas it occupies. On its website the Canadian government policy states clearly that “Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The settlements also constitute a serious obstacle to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace.”



## **MAR 6 CONTINUATION OF UNSETTLING GOODS CAMPAIGN**

**Origin:** The Church in Action Committee of Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications if Known:**

**The Church in Action Committee of Maritime Conference proposes that:** If current program is continued, financial implications should not significantly increase over current spending

**Staffing Implications if Known:** We recommend this work to be made a priority for staffing.

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission and Service

**Volunteer Implications:** United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel would continue their active animation of this campaign

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) directs the Executive of the General Council to ensure the allocation of adequate General Council Office resources for the continued implementation of The United Church of Canada Unsettling Goods campaign until the occupation, as defined by the Fourth Geneva Convention, comes to an end**

### **Background**

- The “Unsettling Goods” Campaign is The United Church of Canada’s response to and implementation of the resolution on Palestine/Israel which passed with a strong majority at the 41st General Council meeting in August 2012
- We commend the General Council Office staff, elected members, as well as United Church members and friends for the implementation to date of the Unsettling Goods campaign
- To honour the call of our Palestinian Christian partners (as found in the Kairos Palestine document), more time is needed for consciousness raising, education and communication across the United Church on this complex issue. Continuing courageous conversations can help inform our analysis and strengthen our faithfulness.
- The campaign encourages church members and supporters to pray, choose and speak to help end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and includes resources for worship and study, ethical tours of the Holy Land, trust-building programs between Israelis and Palestinians, support for Palestinian livelihoods by purchasing fair trade products such as Zatoun olive oil and planting olive trees, and avoiding purchasing products made in the illegal\* Israeli settlements.
- The economic action part of the “Unsettling Goods” campaign is a non-violent response to the call of The United Church of Canada’s global partners in the region and reflects a core biblical value that “peace requires justice”.
- The “Unsettling Goods” economic action campaign is a response focused not at Israel itself, but only against those products made in the illegal Israeli settlements\* on Palestinian land.
- The latest news from the region shows an aggressive increase in both illegal\* settlement construction and demolition of Palestinian houses by the Israeli military.
- There is evidence that global pressure (including economic action) to end the occupation is having an impact. Keeping the pressure on could more quickly lead to just peace. The “Unsettling Goods” campaign encourages modest justice-seeking consumer choices

(economic action against products made in the illegal Israeli settlements) that aim to help end the occupation and lay the foundation for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.

- As a non-violent response to the disproportionate violence being experienced daily by Palestinians, the “Unsettling Goods” Campaign should be continued until the illegal occupation ends or until a more effective response is identified.

(\*The Fourth Geneva Convention is an international law that forbids an occupying power from moving its own people into areas it occupies. On its website the Canadian government policy states clearly that “Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The settlements also constitute a serious obstacle to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace.”)

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett / Sean Handcock moved that the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposals #1 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign”, #3 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign”, and #7 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign” to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) Corner Brook, NFLD/LAB – August 8-15, 2015  
Response Sheet – Blueberry (Blue) Commission**



A series of 22 horizontal lines providing a space for writing responses.

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## **SK 9 RESTORATIVE CARE FOR MISSION UNITS OR OUTREACH MINISTRIES**

**Origin:** The Saskatchewan Conference Finance and Administration Committee

**Financial Implications:** Currently approximately \$700.00 per Mission Unit or Outreach Ministry

**Staffing Implications:** Minimal, as there would be a few ministries added to the list of those contributing or claiming

**Source of Funding:** The Restorative Care levy would be assessed to the Mission Units or Outreach Ministries

**The Saskatchewan Conference Finance and Administration Committee proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) amend its policy with respect to Restorative Care so that Mission Units, Outreach Ministries, and other ministries which are not pastoral charges be required to participate in (that is, contribute to and receive benefits from) the Restorative Care Plan, and that Mission Units, Outreach Ministries, and other ministries which are not pastoral charges be advised of such requirement to participate.**

### **Background:**

Ministry Personnel who are in a pastoral charge Mission Unit or Outreach Ministry who are disabled are entitled to receive salary & benefits for the duration of the disability up to a maximum of 6 months paid for by the pastoral charge, Mission Unit, or Outreach Ministry (The Manual, s. I.2.2.2 and s. I.2.2.3).

This places a burden on the pastoral charge, Mission unit, or Outreach ministry which must both pay salary & benefits and finance supply and staffing during this absence. Pastoral charges pay into the Restorative Care Plan, which is an insurance plan whose benefits assist with these costs. Other Mission Units or Outreach ministries cannot pay in and are not eligible for benefits.

Not only is this a justice issue with some of our ministries being treated differently than others, not only does work in our health care and inner city ministries have a higher risk of illness or disability, but unlike pastoral charges which have collections and donations from members and adherents as a source of revenue Mission Units or Outreach Ministries are usually short of funds and have fewer sources of revenue both to pay salary for the disabled ministry personnel and to staff ongoing activities in the ministry personnel's absence.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

## **ANW 13 CHILD WELL-BEING INDEX**

**Origin: Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church Women**

**Financial Implications if known: unknown**

**Staffing Implications if known: unknown**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church Women propose that:**

**On behalf of The United Church of Canada, the Moderator and the General Secretary promote the adoption of a national Child Well-being Index. This can be achieved by writing to the Prime Minister, each Premier, the whole church and the national media demanding immediate action for children.**

### **Background:**

“What father among you would hand his son a stone when he asked for bread? Or hand him a snake instead of a fish? Or hand him a scorpion if he asked for an egg? If you then who are evil know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?”

*(Luke 11 – 11-13 Jerusalem Bible/Readers’ Edition)*

1. All children have the right to good health and good quality health care. All children should have clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so they can stay healthy.<sup>1</sup>
2. All children have the right to a good quality education and should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level they can.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of an education is to develop every child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities.<sup>3</sup>
3. The government has a responsibility to make sure children’s rights are protected. Governments must help families protect the rights of children and provide an environment where children can grow and reach their full potential.<sup>4</sup>
4. In Alberta alone, 143,200 children lived below the Low Income Measure in 2012. This represents 16.2 per cent of all Alberta children. Compared to 16.4 per cent in 1989, there has been no significant positive change.<sup>5</sup>
5. In 2012, the ruling Conservative Party promised Albertans to eliminate child poverty by 2017. This is far from reality.

We challenge all levels of Canadian government to implement a child-specific index to measure the effectiveness of programs aimed to improve the well-being of all our children.

### **Child Well-being Index<sup>6</sup>**

All children have a right to:

1. three meals a day based on the most recent Canada Food Guide.
2. adequate, affordable, safe housing.
3. enough clothes for different seasons (both new and second-hand) a minimum of 2 pairs of well-fitting shoes and a pair of winter boots.
4. preventative and curative physical and mental health services including:
  - child mental health professionals

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- annual medical check-up
  - dental and vision care and required prescriptions
  - adequate rest and play.
5. relationships which nurture each child's spirit in fulfilling the need for:
    - safety at home, at school or daycare and in his or her neighborhood
    - consistent and predictable love and support.
  6. safe, high quality, affordable daycare and drop-in day care.
  7. age-appropriate books, an internet connection, indoor games and educational toys suitable for the child's age and knowledge level and a quiet, bright place to study.
  8. a quality education, where each child is encouraged to reach his or her full potential.
  9. free public transportation in urban areas.
  10. regular involvement in:
    - organized, age-appropriate physical activities both indoors and outdoors
    - the fine arts
    - school and community outings and wilderness experiences.

This Proposal was developed in collaboration with the Canadian Federation of University Women (Lethbridge and District Chapter).

It takes the whole community to raise a child.

#### Footnotes:

- 1 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed by Canada in 1989 Article 24.
- 2 Article 28
- 3 Article 29
- 4 Article 4
- 5 *No Change: After 25 years of Promises, it is Time to Eliminate Child Poverty* November 2014 Edmonton Social Planning Council, Alberta College of Social Workers and Public Interest Alberta (25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the all-party House of Commons promise to eliminate child poverty in Canada.)
- 6 *The Child Wellbeing Index was created in Alberta and was adapted and modelled in part using:*
  - the *UNICEF 14-Item Child Specific Deprivation Index*. (Innocenti Research Centre, 2012)
  - the *All You Need Is? Measuring Children's Perceptions and Experiences of Deprivation* (Barnardos and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul based on research conducted by the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College Dublin, 2011)
  - *Developing a Deprivation Index: The Research Process* (Matern, Mendelson and Oliphant...The story of the development of the Ontario Deprivation Index, 2009)

#### Intermediate Court Action:

Presented by the Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church Women to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

## **TOR 10 TREATMENT OF PRISON INMATES**

**Origin: Community Connections and Right Relations Commission, Living Waters  
Presbytery, Toronto Conference**

**Financial Implications if known: Nil**

**Staffing Implications if known: Nil**

**Source of Funding if known: Nil**

**The Community Connections and Right Relations Commission of Living Waters  
Presbytery, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

- a) contact the Prime Minister, the party leaders and appropriate ministers calling on them to eliminate solitary confinement;**
- b) contact the Prime Minister, the party leaders and appropriate ministers calling on them to:**
  - Provide better training of staff regarding mental health issues of offenders;**
  - Schedule mental health assessments and development of treatment strategies;**
  - Ensure transfer of inmates prone to injuring themselves to treatment centres;**
  - Ensure that there is adequate oversight of prison conditions.**
  - Work more closely with the John Howard Society, the Elizabeth Fry Society, and the Canadian Mental Health Association in developing better strategies for treatment and training.**

### **Background:**

The federal government of Canada is facing two current lawsuits around the use of solitary confinement for prison inmates. The BC Civil Liberties Association and the John Howard Society of Canada are claiming that the practice violates the right to life, liberty and security of person. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association and the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies have filed a similar petition challenging the constitutionality of isolation and claiming that it is cruel and inhumane.

Solitary confinement, also known as administrative segregation, is described by Corrections Canada as a measure of last resort. According to the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the purpose of administrative segregation is to maintain the security of the penitentiary or the safety of any person by not allowing an inmate to associate with other inmates. At any given time, as many as 1,800 inmates are in solitary confinement in provincial or federal institutions, deprived of meaningful human contact for up to 23 hours a day. These conditions result in significant periods of sensory deprivation and social isolation.

According to the John Howard Society, solitary confinement is a risk factor for suicide behind bars. It can exacerbate pre-existing mental illness and create mental illness where none previously existed. Solitary confinement has been described by the United Nations and by the Canadian Medical Association Journal as “cruel and unusual punishment.” It is inconsistent with human rights law, particularly when mental illness is involved. The negative effects of long-term solitary confinement are well-documented. These effects include psychosis, hallucinations, insomnia and confusion. Solitary confinement can create mental illness where none previously existed, or exacerbate pre-existing illness.

The damaging effects of solitary confinement increase the longer the prisoner is kept isolated. The effects of long-term isolation can also seriously hinder a prisoner’s rehabilitation. And as the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture has observed, when solitary confinement is indefinite – that is, without a specified end-date – harm is compounded: “The feeling of uncertainty when not informed of the length of solitary confinement exacerbates the pain and suffering of the individuals who are subjected to it.” Accordingly, the Special Rapporteur has found that prolonged or indefinite solitary confinement can amount to torture.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission has called for greater limits on the use of solitary confinement, including an absolute ban on its use on inmates who are suicidal, self-harming or have other significant mental health problems.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Received for information by Living Waters Presbytery (March 10, 2015) and passed on to Toronto Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.



## **GCE 9 – REF MEPS10 - THE STEERING GROUP ON THE CANDIDACY PATHWAY**

**Origin: Executive of the General Council**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes to:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- 1. the implementation of a seven-phase Candidacy Pathway and its purpose to call forth, identify, accompany, equip, assess, authorize, and celebrate those persons whom God calls to and endows for the Order of Ministry, offering leadership in Christ's diverse ministries contributing to God's mission in creation (see GCE 6, 40<sup>th</sup> General Council, 2009, Appendix A, [resource library](#));**
- 2. the implementation of the seven-phase Candidacy Pathway be informed by the report of the Steering Group on Candidacy Pathway;**
- 3. authorize revisions to The Manual of The United Church of Canada required to implement the Candidacy Pathway;**
- 4. the Executive of the General Council be directed to develop a policy document for the Candidacy Pathway reflective of these recommendations and to develop a Candidacy Pathway implementation strategy; and**
- 5. it approve the development and implementation of a seven-phase Pathway toward Recognition as a Designated Lay Minister with the purpose to call forth, identify, accompany, equip, assess, authorize, and celebrate those persons whom God calls to and endows for service as Recognized Designated Lay Ministers, offering leadership in Christ's diverse ministries and contributing to God's mission in creation.**
- 6. And that this General Council authorize a Category 2 remit to test the will of the church with respect to this policy change.**

**Background:**

See pages REPORTS 137-144: [Report: The Steering Group on Candidacy Pathway](#)

**Policy for the Proposal:**

- 1. The Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership resource and the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice (or their successor) will be incorporated into all phases of the Candidacy Pathway**
- 2. Each Conference is authorized to develop a Candidacy Pathway suitable to its own context, provided that it incorporates all the Core Values and Principles of the Candidacy Pathway, the Seven Phases of the Candidacy Pathway, the Learning Outcomes for**

Ministry Leadership, the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice for Ministry Personnel, and the policies included in this proposal

3. One Candidacy Pathway will be developed in each Conference which is adaptable and applicable to both the Ordered Ministry and the Designated Lay Ministry streams

### **The Seven Phases:**

#### **1. Calling Forth**

- 1.1. The Church will engage a creative and invitational approach for calling forth individuals to serve as ministry personnel within our denomination.
- 1.2. The practice of hosting “discernment weekends” is endorsed as one method (but not the sole method) of calling forth individuals to ministry leadership.

#### **2. Identify**

- 2.1. The Church will engage a variety of tools or agencies to be used to test a person’s giftedness for ministry and affirms that not all methods need to be used in each case.
- 2.2. The Identify phase of the Candidacy Pathway will be engaged for those who feel called as Designated Lay Ministers and Licensed Lay Worship Leaders).
- 2.3. A committee or board at the Conference level will deal with matters concerning candidacy; Boards may be sub-divided into sub-committees or panels, each of which would interact with a limited number of students.
- 2.4. Those discerning a call to vocational ministry must have been actively involved in a local ministry or mission of The United Church of Canada for a period of 24 months prior to seeking recognition as a Candidate for the Order of Ministry.
- 2.5. There is no membership requirement in a congregation before discernment can begin.
- 2.6. All inquirers sensing a call to ministry must demonstrate active participation in the life and work of a congregation of The United Church of Canada.
- 2.7. All inquirers must be full members of The United Church of Canada to be eligible for recognition as a candidate for the Order of Ministry and for appointment to a ministry position.

#### **3. Accompany**

- 3.1. Circles of Accompaniment will support students and candidates, offering clear communication and guidance. Circles of Accompaniment will not have an evaluative role.
- 3.2. When information comes to the attention of a Circle of Accompaniment that raises serious concerns about the student’s promise, suitability, fitness, and readiness for service as ministry personnel, those concerns may be communicated to the Candidacy Board for it to address with the student. The Circle of Accompaniment will advise the student that it will be raising the information with the Candidacy Board.

#### **4. Equip**

- 4.1. The Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership resource and the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice (or their successors) will be incorporated into students’ field placement opportunities and Supervised Ministry Education experiences.
- 4.2. Student learning goals will be matched with the learning opportunities available at the learning site through the educational supervisor

- 4.3. Readiness for a Supervised Ministry Education placement will not constitute a promise of a placement.
- 4.4. The peer learning group model used in the St. Andrew's College internship program and in the educational program for Diaconal Ministry offered at the Canadian Centre for Christian Studies are endorsed as models of integrated Supervised Ministry Education.
- 4.5. Students may request a transfer of their candidacy between Conferences, even if the Conferences do not operate identical Candidacy Pathways; both Conferences involved will determine if the transfer request will be granted on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.6. For those on the pathway to ordained ministry, Supervised Ministry Education may occur before the student has completed her/his educational training at a theological school, and can begin following the completion of the first year of formal graduate-level theological studies [currently not applicable to those enrolled in the Summer Distance Master of Divinity Degree program offered through Atlantic School of Theology and those enrolled in the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre].
- 4.7. Candidates will be permitted to serve their Supervised Ministry Education period on a full-time or a part-time basis; the minimum requirement in a part-time Supervised Ministry Education placement or appointment is half-time (20 hours per week).
- 4.8. Each Candidacy Board will determine the length of Supervised Ministry Education required of the student on a case by case basis; the minimum period of Supervised Ministry Education is 1,360 hours (the equivalent of 34 weeks at 40 hours per week); these hours may be served in one placement or appointment or in a combination of placements and/or appointments; the minimum period for any placement or appointment in Supervised Ministry Education is 13 weeks.
- 4.9. The Candidacy Board will approve each period of Supervised Ministry Education and the nature of that Supervised Ministry Education placement prior to the commencement of each placement.
- 4.10. A variety of Supervised Ministry Education opportunities will be open to candidates for ordained ministry, including placements in missional settings and summer placements; the identification of learning sites is the responsibility of the Conferences.
- 4.11. Intentional efforts will be made to identify potential learning sites and to urge those sites to continue to be learning sites for candidates.
- 4.12. The Ministry of Supervision training program will be adapted to include instruction on longer-term supervision, off-site supervision, the use of technology in supervision, and the Candidacy Pathway's Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership.
- 4.13. The Lay Supervision Team will support, accompany, and encourage the student through providing feedback to the student and periodic evaluation to the student and the Educational Supervisor.

## 5. Assess

- 5.1. The Candidacy Board (or other board of the Conference) will assess the promise, suitability, readiness, and effectiveness of each candidate for ministry.
- 5.2. Candidacy Boards will be trained on maintaining effective, clear, direct, and consistent communications with each student.

- 5.3. Candidacy Boards will be comprised of competent, trained, ethical, and accountable individuals, who operate in a transparent manner and adopt best practices in a consistent manner.
- 5.4. Student will have the right be accompanied by a person of the student's choice present at all meetings with the Candidacy Board or a sub-committee or panel of the Board; the accompanier has the right to be present, but does not have the right to speak unless the Candidacy Board or sub-committee or panel of the Board invites the accompanier to speak or grants permission in response to a request to speak.
- 5.5. Candidacy Boards and any sub-committee or panel of the Boards will endeavor to maintain gender balance in their membership to draw from various ethnicities.
- 5.6. The training of Candidacy Board members will include specific training on "cross-cultural interviewing" and "interviewing those who are differently-abled."
- 5.7. Candidacy Board processes will be open to appeal, should a student wish to challenge a process at any stage of the candidacy pathway; such appeals shall follow the appeals process as set out in the current version of The Manual of the United Church.
- 5.8. If a Candidacy Board decides to end a student's candidacy or if the student withdraws from the candidacy pathway and the student subsequently feels called again to ministry, the student will begin the candidacy pathway process at the beginning.

## **6. Authorize**

- 6.1. The Candidacy Board and the Conferences will authorize candidates as ready for ordination, commissioning or recognition.

## **7. Celebrate**

- 7.1. The ministry of all persons called to paid accountable ministry will be celebrated by the Conference, including those recognized as Designated Lay Ministers.
- 7.2. The Church recognizes the increasing diversity of new and renewing ministries within The United Church of Canada, the opportunities to serve in ministry within the offices of the various courts of the denomination, and the wider opportunities for ministry beyond our denomination (such as chaplaincies in the Canadian Forces, correctional institutions, educational institutions, and hospitals; and teaching ministries) and affirms that candidates for the Order of Ministry may be called to serve in those ministries.
- 7.3. The Church affirms that, as the number of opportunities for service within a pastoral charge context decreases, opportunities to serve in more missional settings may increase. The celebration of ministry through ordination or commissioning will not be limited to those who have received a call or an appointment to a pastoral charge or presbytery accountable ministry or who are pursuing further studies.
- 7.4. The Church will celebrate the achievement of the conclusion of each student's candidacy pathway and the Conference will commission or ordain those who have completed the pathway and who have accepted a call, appointment, or offer of employment to a paid accountable ministry, as determined by the Presbytery in which the ministry is geographically located.

## **Particular Concerns for Francophone Inquirers and Candidates**

1. Resource documents, forms, and courses will be produced in French language to meet the needs of French-speaking inquirers and candidates.

2. The Church will be intentional in identifying and training suitable individuals to serve as French-speaking educational supervisors.
3. Learning sites among Francophone congregations and within French-speaking missions will be identified and invited to participate in the Candidacy Pathway.
4. Candidacy Boards will endeavor to have a sub-committee or panel whose members are fluent in the French language and have experience in ministry in French within The United Church of Canada.

### **Manual Revision Requirements**

If the Candidacy Pathway proposal were adopted, the sections of The Manual 2013 that would have to be revised are:

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| C.4.4.2(b)(iv)      | Secretary of Presbytery sending the names of those the presbytery is recommending for ordination or commissioning to the CES or Speaker by April 1st |
| H.2                 | Vocation in Ministry   |
| H.3                 | Discernment for Ministry   |
| H.4                 | Preparation for Ministry   |
| H.6.3               | Final Examinations and Approval  |
| H.6.4               | Transfer and Settlement or Other Approved Option   |
| I.1.3.2 and I.1.3.3 | Appointment (to permit candidates to be appointed by presbyteries to fill vacancies and to be appointed to other presbytery accountable ministries)  |

The Entering Ministry Resource Document and the Designated Lay Ministry Resource Document would also have to be revised significantly.

## **GCE 11 FAITHFUL, EFFECTIVE AND LEARNED LEADERS FOR THE CHURCH WE ARE BECOMING: A COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH TO MINISTERIAL EDUCATION**

**Origin:** The Executive of the General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council:**

- 1. Recommends to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council that it:**
  - a. Approve the adoption of a competency-based approach to equipping and evaluating people for leadership in ministry and mission.**
  - b. Affirm that assessing the academic readiness and competence for leadership in ministry and mission is a core responsibility of the church.**
  - c. Affirm The United Church of Canada's relationship with its theological schools, and education and retreat centres, and recognize their on-going contribution to the formation and education of church leadership by continuing to provide funding for representative institutions as outlined in this document.**
  - d. Direct the General Secretary to establish a process to implement the competency-based approach. This process will include working with the Theological Schools Circle, and other educational partners, to realize the recommendations of the Task Group and the items identified in the Consensus Statement of the Theological Schools Circle, including the tradition of Testamur-granting schools. This process will also include integrating the competency-based approach with other leadership formation and education initiatives that have been, or may be, approved: the One Order of Ministry proposal of the Joint Ministry Group, the Report of the Candidacy Pathways Pilot Project Steering Group, and the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relations initiative.**

### **Background**

(The Report of the Working Group on Leadership Formation for Ministry with Appendices can be found online at <http://www.united-church.ca/general-council/gce/2014> under the Additional Information section of the November 2014 meeting of the GCE.)

After two years of extensive discussion, research and consultation, the Working Group on Leadership Formation for Ministry has presented its report to the General Secretary recommending a new competency-based approach to leadership education and formation. The Working Group understands that the adoption of this approach would have especially significant implications for the theological schools that currently retain the right to grant *testamur*. The church's partnership with its schools is a valued relationship. There has been extensive

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consultation and conversation, therefore, with the Theological Schools Circle (Principals, Keeper and Deans) at every step of developing this proposal. The members of the Theological Schools Circle have acknowledged the merits of a competency-based approach, named their concerns, and committed themselves to continuing to partner with the church in a renewed spirit of cooperation and collaboration. It is in that spirit that future discussions with the schools regarding implementation of this proposal would be conducted.

### **TICIF 3 TOWARDS A NEW MODEL OF MEMBERSHIP**

**Origin:** The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee proposes that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council:

1. **Direct the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee to invite the church into a study of the meaning of membership, including the relationship of baptism and membership, and bring to the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council a new model of membership for the church;**
2.
  - a) **Approve that the full members of a community of faith may consent to allow adherents to vote on all matters before meetings of the community of faith; and**
  - b) **Authorize a category 2 remit to test the will of the church in respect to this change.**

#### **Background**

The Executive of General Council, meeting March 21-23, 2015, received this report of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, expressed its appreciation to the Committee in the development of the report, and recommended the report and its proposals to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council for approval.

#### **Why this proposal? Our current practices and the challenges they present.**

The Theological and InterChurch InterFaith Committee, in 2013 and 2014, undertook an initial review and exploration of theological and functional issues in the current practice of membership in the church. In its initial work, the Committee identified a range of questions concerning membership. It believes that these questions will continue to frame the study proposed for the next triennium.

*What does it mean to be a member of The United Church of Canada? What does it mean for the church when formal understandings of membership no longer work? Should membership be primarily about discipleship and faith, or about governance of the church? Is baptism necessary for membership and or leadership in the church? Is it possible for someone to be a member of the United Church without belonging to a congregation? How might individuals involved in new emerging faith communities be members of the church? What might membership mean in non-congregational settings like community ministries? What happens to membership for those whose church closes and for whom no other United Church community is accessible? How does the United Church deal with a generational shift away from formal structures and therefore formal understandings of membership? Is membership at all a meaningful term today? If membership is no longer working, how can the United Church govern itself?*



These questions emerge from the new social context and generational shifts that have engulfed the church. Diana Butler Bass and others have pointed to this as a shift in understanding from

*Believing – Behaving – Belonging* to *Belonging – Behaving – Believing*<sup>1</sup>.

Many churches experience welcoming people who have not been baptised and who have had little or no experience with traditional church life. Many of these people desire to be involved and are often invited into participation and leadership as part of a journey of deepening faith and connection with the church.

For most of this new generation of participants, membership is synonymous with belonging. Showing up, attending worship, giving, serving on committees and leading activities are all related to this sense of being members, of belonging. It is a challenge for most to understand the significance of Christian baptism and profession of faith as intimately linked to membership. Many have found themselves in circumstances where they discover and are surprised that they are not considered members and eligible to vote or serve on church councils.

In part, this is because our current membership practice clearly represents the former paradigm above. This model is not a challenge in an overwhelming Christian society where most people are baptised as children. But it looks quite different from the context of someone who has no church memory or history and for whom profession of faith and baptism are entirely new concepts.

Adult baptism and a public profession of faith is, in this context, a significant step that most would choose to take only after a longer journey of exploration and formation. And in many cases it is leadership roles in the congregation that bring individuals to such a faith commitment.

Is baptism then best practiced as the required entry point to membership and active participation in the life of a congregation, or is it better seen as a significant step of discipleship and spiritual commitment emerging from that participation? What might it mean to open our understanding of membership to a new paradigm of membership in which the entry point is the choice to join to participate in God’s mission? And how might a shift in this practice allow the church to deepen and strengthen its practice of baptism at the heart of its life?

The United Church has extensively explored its understanding and practice of membership since the 1960’s. In 1962 the Division of Mission in Canada released the report “Doctrine and Practice of Church Membership.” It was followed by several years of exploration on Christian Initiation (1980 – 1984) including the first remit extended to all pastoral charges. The most recent report “Belonging: Privilege and Responsibility” was received by the 37<sup>th</sup> GC (2000).

In 1984 and 2000, remits were sent to pastoral charges and presbyteries testing the affirmation that all who are baptised are members of the church. (The remits emerged from the ambiguous

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<sup>1</sup> Christianity After Religion. Diana Butler Bass. 2012

meaning of Basis 5.8.1. which suggest that all baptised children are members, but have the “privilege and duty” when they reach the age of discretion to enter into “full membership”.) In essence the failure of both remits is understood to mean that a formal profession of faith (expressed for children as confirmation) in addition to baptism is required for membership. While the 1984 remit also sought clarity around the admission of children to communion, and failed, momentum reflected in the liturgical practices of the church, and the significant and timely report “*A Place For You*” has clearly answered the question, regardless of the remit, that children are indeed welcome at communion. The 2000 remit tested a proposal that the church no longer use the term “full membership.” While the remit also failed, it is clear that momentum has continued with many churches no longer making a clear distinction between baptism and “full” membership.

The 37<sup>th</sup> General Council (2000), possibly in anticipation of the difficulties presented by the remit, requested the Theology and Faith Committee to prepare the “necessary resources that would enable The United Church of Canada to engage in a discussion of the meaning and theology of baptism as well as the nature of the church (ecclesiology).” While no formal action was taken by the Theology and Faith Committee on this request, the committee responded for other reasons to the challenge of ecclesiology with the report “*A Church With Purpose*” to the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council (2012.)

While questions remain of the relationship of baptism, full membership, and profession of faith, it is clear that other questions surrounding the meaning of membership are also taking on significance.

As rural and remote congregations close, what avenues of continued membership remain for faithful members for whom there is no easily accessible United Church community? The Uniting Church of Australia authorizes Presbyteries to maintain membership roles in such situations. Should this be a practice in the United Church?

Community (outreach) ministries are questioning models of the church that exclude people on the margins of society (most often encountered in community ministries) as not full participants or members of the church. Are not many of the attributes of church membership, they question, present among the people who participate in these ministries irrespective of, or perhaps specifically because of the reality that they are often among the poorest and most vulnerable members of our society?

Currently membership is limited to those recorded by a church session or its equivalent (with the exception of armed forces chaplaincies). Membership, in other words, presupposes an established and traditional congregational model. Many new forms of faith communities are emerging. How might it be possible for those who choose to express their faith in these new forms of community to share in membership and leadership in the United Church? Is it possible to open other avenues of church membership that acknowledge much greater variety in what faith communities will look like today and certainly into the future?

Increasing numbers of United Church congregations are responding to requests from members of other faiths who wish to align themselves with the United Church while also remaining

connected to their home faith. Is it possible to structure a form of associate membership that has a different quality to it than “adherent?” Does the term “adherent” any longer adequately address the character of commitment and engagement that is represented by those who choose to align themselves with the United Church?

The Theology and InterChurch InterFaith Committee believes that reflection on membership is timely and necessary at this moment in the church’s life. As part of its work it has consulted extensively with the Comprehensive Review Task Group and agreed that clarity around membership in the church is critical to whatever redesign is proposed around its structure.

In undertaking this proposal the Theology and InterChurch InterFaith Committee recognizes an ongoing debate about whether membership in the church needs to be based on welcoming and inviting participation of a new generation of seekers who have little commitment to formal understandings of membership or, should be focused on high expectations of discipleship and significant preparation for a life changing decision. It believes that whatever proposal is offered needs to meet both objectives.

The challenge of developing a new model of membership, therefore, is that it must represent a church attuned to the new realities of our time while maintaining connection to 2000 years of history; that creates space for local communities of faith to emerge and thrive while at the same time affirming a national identity; to affirm that the church, and therefore membership, is not just an institutional act, but is also incorporation into the body of Christ; and to be open to people in many stages of a faith journey while continuing to affirm baptism as the one universal sacrament of belonging for the world-wide community of Christ.

### **Why the interim step of allowing Adherents to vote on all matters before congregational meetings?**

There are two situations which most clearly reveal the challenges to our current membership practices. The first is the restrictions placed on adherents in voting on “spiritual” matters in congregational meetings. By definition, adherents are active participants in a community of faith. Currently the Manual Section 3.7.2 allows, with the approval of full members, adherents the right to vote solely on financial and administrative matters. Further restrictions are placed in Section 3.7.3 on specific areas on which adherents may not vote. Basis 5.8.2 also limits adherents to voting on temporal matters.

For many, the difference between being a full member and adherent is whether they were baptised and confirmed at a younger age, or came into the church later in life and simply became involved. In other words, the difficulty confirms the analysis above that belonging is more important to many today than formal criteria of membership. The restrictions also maintain an increasingly unclear distinction between spiritual and temporal matters. Why can an adherent vote on the budget of a community of faith, with significant spiritual implications, while not being able to vote on anything related to the order of worship? This proposal moves the church in the direction of a new model consistent with that which the Theology and InterChurch InterFaith Committee believes is emerging, and allows congregations to determine for themselves how adherents may participate in decisions of the community of faith.

The second area of difficulty is the restriction against adherents serving on the governing board of a community of faith. Currently all members of the governing board must be full members (Section 7.3.1). Many congregations currently ignore this restriction and allow adherents to serve at times in formal positions of leadership. This proposal does not address this problem. It leaves in place the requirement recognizing it is part of the larger discussion on membership and discipleship and will need to be addressed in a more comprehensive proposal.

### **Appendix A - A Possible Model of Membership for further exploration.**

**This model is not part of the proposal before the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council. It is included here to inform the Council of the work undertaken to date by the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee.**

The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee has explored and tested a new model of membership and offers it here only as one possibility that it believes should be examined further in the study proposed for the next triennium. In the initial testing of the model, it became clear that a key issue is the relationship of baptism and membership. This is one of the issues that will require further study and conversation across the church. It is expected that further conversation will help to refine this model, or contribute to the development of a new and different approach.

#### ***Member***

*The Members of a Community of Faith are those who have been welcomed by the governing board and have affirmed their desire to:*

- *Follow Jesus by choosing to live a life of compassion*
- *Live and act in hope for God's world*
- *Grow in faith within (this) community of The United Church of Canada*

*Children of Members are also members of the Community of Faith. At an appropriate age to be determined by the Community of Faith they will be invited to make their own affirmation of membership or to become Professing Members.*

*Members of the Community of Faith are eligible to vote at all meetings and to serve at all levels of governance of the community subject to the oversight of the Community of Faith.*

#### ***Professing Member***

*A person becomes a Professing Member of the Community of Faith with the approval of the governing board (or the Community of Faith) through baptism (if not already baptised) and profession of faith.*

*It is the hope of The United Church of Canada that every member of a Community of Faith will be invited to become professing members of the church.*

*The Community of Faith may determine which offices and roles within its structures require professing membership.*

*All candidates for accountable ministry and representatives to other courts of the United Church shall be professing members.*

*A roll of professing member will be held local communities of faith and may also be held by the General Council.*

**Associate Member**

*A Community of Faith may enter the names of individuals on their membership roll who wish to align themselves with the mission and ministry of the Community and The United Church of Canada as Associate Members. Associate Members shall have voice at all meetings of the Community of Faith but shall not vote.*

**The Implications of this Model:**

In this model, baptism is not required for membership in a local community of faith, nor for positions of leadership in that community of faith. All members (rather than only Full Members) will be allowed to vote on spiritual (non-temporal) matters.

The model proposes “Professing Member” as a change in name for “Full Member” but leaves intact the existing manual provisions, while requiring that all candidates for accountable ministry leadership, and all representatives to higher courts be professing members. The name of “Associate Member” is changed from the existing category of “Adherent” and Associate Members will have voice at all meetings of the Community of Faith, but no vote.

The model emphasizes an invitation to become members of the church to all those who desire to follow Jesus by living a life of compassion; who desire to align themselves in hope to God’s mission and to grow in faith within a local community of The United Church of Canada. These words have been chosen as a basic, open and invitational call to join with a community of seekers and believers.<sup>2</sup> The phrasing of “to follow Jesus by living a life of compassion” (rather than simply *to follow Jesus*) is intentional in giving meaning and focus to an often abused concept. It also lifts up the link to the scriptural qualities of faith, hope and love.

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| To follow Jesus by choosing to live a life of compassion              | Love  |
| To live and act in hope for God’s world                               | Hope  |
| To grow in faith within this community of The United Church of Canada | Faith |

The affirmations emphasize the movement of the spirit in the life of an individual to engage in ministry as well as function within the organization of the community of faith. It moves the church away therefore from institutional understandings of membership based on rights and responsibilities.

Membership, in this model, will be initiated by a request to the governing board. (For example it could be an *Application for Membership* card with the above criteria that is signed and given to

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<sup>2</sup> With appreciation, the first two are drawn from the work of Kennon Callahan.

the minister or other representative of the community.) Members are those who are affirmed by the governing board and who are recorded on the roll of members. Members are eligible to vote at congregational or community meetings on all matters and to serve in all positions of leadership within the community of faith (subject to the oversight of the Community of Faith – see later.)

The critical difference from existing policy, in this model, is that baptism and a formal, public profession of faith will not be required for local church membership.

In this model, the term *Professing Member* is chosen as a way of being descriptive rather than hierarchical. Professing Members are those who have been baptised and have made a public profession of faith.

The model maintains the existing terminology in the Manual for “Full Member” and upholds the language of the Basis of Union 8.6.2 (b) “that no terms of admission to full membership shall be prescribed other than those laid down in the New Testament.”

The intention would be to encourage “members” to move towards “Professing Member” as a journey in discipleship, i.e. to see it as an invitational and significant spiritual step rather than as something necessary for either “fitting in” or as a hurdle to participating in the decision-making of the congregation.

In this model, the following statement would be added to the Manual accompanying the description of Professing Member:

*It is the hope of The United Church of Canada that every member of a community of faith will be invited to become professing members of the church.*

The community of faith would maintain responsibility for oversight of membership and could vary in their practices for Professing Member from a formal process of study and a one time “profession of faith”, to more informal practices of multiple occasions of “profession.”

The community of faith would also have responsibility for determining which offices must be filled by Professing Members. In other words, a community of faith might choose to follow a more traditional pattern and determine that all members of the governing board will be Professing Members, or perhaps the Session and Elders if that model of governance is chosen. These options would provide for significant diversity in the practices of membership among communities of faith within the United Church. Christian but denominational identity would be maintained in setting the foundations of membership in the required three affirmations.

Identity and continuity with the global Christian community would also be maintained by requiring all candidates for paid accountable ministry (and therefore all ministers) as well as representatives to other courts of the church to be baptised and professing members. It would also be the hope that a majority of members of a local community of faith would become professing members.

A roll of Professing Members, in this model, would be maintained by a local community of faith, but also might be maintained by the General Council. This would provide a location in which professing (or previously “full” members) of the church whose congregation have closed might maintain their connection with the larger church. Maintaining a record of professing members at the General Council could also replace transfer of membership processes.

### **Associate Member**

The category of Adherent will be renamed as Associate member. Associate Members will be individuals who wish to align themselves with a community of faith (and with the United Church) as a sign of support for their work in the community and the world. It might involve individuals who are members of other faith bodies who do not desire to leave their own tradition (and do not wish to be involved as a voting member of the United Church community) but wish to stand with the United Church community in solidarity. It might be someone who periodically visits (summer or winter home) and again does not want to be a voting member. Associate Members will be recorded on the membership roll and will have voice at community of faith meetings, but no vote.

This understanding of Associate Membership would also mean that distinctions between spiritual and temporal (financial) matters would no longer be necessary.

### **Multiple or Dual Memberships**

In this model, there is no restriction necessarily placed on multiple or dual memberships. This will be the responsibility of the governing board of the congregation to determine. The welcoming as members (of the local community) of those from faiths other than Christian will depend on the willingness of the individual to make the affirmation required (which is possible for many other faith traditions.) In this case it will still be the responsibility of the governing board to explore the reasons for their request to be a voting member of the community of faith, rather than an associate member.

Individuals who desire to maintain membership in other denominations or faiths would not be eligible for Professing Membership, since this involves authorization for serving on governing bodies beyond the local community of faith, and as accountable ministers of the denomination. There will no restriction to those who wish to hold membership or professing membership in more than one United Church community of faith.

### **Theological Background**

The document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (1982) of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches lift ups the centrality of baptism as the universal sacrament of entry into the body of Christ (the church). Together with *One Baptism: Towards Mutual Recognition* (2011) these documents point to diversity in the practice of baptism while maintaining its central meaning of incorporation into the body of Christ, the church. Both documents identify as an aspect of diversity the possibility of significant time between the various rites of initiation.

The United Church has historically affirmed both infant and adult baptism even though infant baptism has long been the usual practice. It is not the intention of this proposed model of membership to diminish the church’s emphasis on infant baptism. It will undoubtedly remain the established and normative liturgical celebration of the welcoming or initiation of the child of a

believing family into the community of faith. However, as a number of theologians have noted, among them Douglas John Hall, the end of Christendom requires the church to reorient its life. This includes, Hall argues, the recovery of the practice of adult baptism.

As noted earlier, the challenge the church faces appears to be between adopting a stance of radical welcome and hospitality to a new generation of seekers versus a focus on high expectations of discipleship and significant preparation for membership in the church.

To choose the latter suggests that baptism, profession of faith and therefore membership would come only after an extensive time of preparation and that any form of leadership or spiritual decision making in the life of the congregation would be delayed until that time. To choose the former appears to mean abandoning any standards of belief and behaviour for membership.

To accept this polarity however, fails to recognize that growth in faith and capacity for leadership and spiritual discernment takes place over time and through engagement. It fails to acknowledge, as Butler-Bass suggests, that for a new generation, belonging and therefore participating is the entry point to this journey.

This model proposes that it is possible to embrace both directions. It offers an entry point that is based on a simple and yet meaningful affirmation of faith. It is responsive to the nudging of the spirit to allow an individual to say that they find their heart aligned with this community of faith, that they are drawn to be part of it. It invites them into a journey of growth through participation. It acknowledges that God's spirit can be active in their lives before baptism as well as after and that they can offer wisdom and leadership to the community while they are growing in faith.

It is not the intention of this model to separate local from national membership. Member and Professing Member will both be located with a local community of faith. What this model offers is an acknowledgment that people are on a spectrum of journeys within a community but they are all a part of the baptised community.

While the United Church has struggled with the lack of clarity in its Basis of Union between "member" and "full member" there is no question as the two remits have shown, that a profession of faith is an integral part of this rite of initiation. But as noted in the World Council statements noted above, the rites of initiation, which also historically includes participation in the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist, are "taken at different points over an extended period of time." It is this extended period of time that points to the relationship of baptism, profession of faith and membership as fluid and varied depending on the particular needs of the community and of the time.

This model emphasizes that baptism brings the community into being as the body of Christ. But within the baptised community there are those who are at all stages of faith, those who have made a profession of faith through baptism, those who are on a journey of deepening faith, and those who desire only to align themselves with the mission and life of the community expressed in the affirmations of faith for membership. In other words, in this model, room is made for those who are held by the baptised community on their journey towards deeper and fuller expressions



of discipleship. In doing so it mirrors the call of Jesus to his disciples, to come and follow me; a call that did not presume baptism, but invited them on a journey.

It affirms that baptism represents the universal and local dimensions of the church. The visible signs of the Kingdom of God at the local level are offered through “membership”, locally defined by the community of faith in inclusive and invitational ways, and the “Professing Member” provision connects the local community of faith spiritually (with the baptismal ritual) and institutionally with the wider denominational and global church.

It seeks to hold up baptism at the heart of the community of faith; not as a bridge to participation and leadership, nor as a solely individualistic expression of faith, but rather as the declaration of the whole community that its members are journeying together in faith and discipleship.

And it therefore assists in recovering the importance of baptism and profession of faith in the life of the church; first in the basic affirmations that are part of being a member of a community of faith, and then in the invitation towards public profession. It moves profession of faith away from confirmation (or as some have said, the graduation model) towards a post-Christendom reality of decision for faith.

There are a wide range of biblical foundations for the model: the journey motifs in Genesis, John Wesley’s famous sermon (based on 2 Kings 10:15) “Is your heart right, as my heart is with your heart .. If it is, give me your hand”; the gifts of the body (1 Corinthians 12); dry bones taking on flesh as a metaphor for membership (Ezekiel 37) ; “Come and see” (John 1:45); Jesus’ call of the disciples.

Participation (belonging) in a Community of Faith, together with the basic affirmations of faith, becomes the main criteria for entry into local church membership. The model welcomes participation and affirms that it is integrally linked to decision making (voting) and leadership (office holding.) The expectations of preparation for profession of faith and baptism as well as the determination of which offices within a local community of faith require professing membership is left to the community itself. Professing membership, in this model, is upheld as a life decision for discipleship.

Finally, the flexibility offered by this model for membership and for associate membership, represents the long standing commitment of the United Church to be in partnership with all those who share our commitment to “mending the world.” It welcomes into our local communities of faith those who share our values and hopes. It witnesses to the church as a community which seeks allies where they can found for the sake of God’s work in the world.

## **MTU 1 FULL PARTICIPATION OF ADHERENTS IN ALL ASPECTS OF CONGREGATIONAL GOVERNANCE**

**Origin:** Burks Falls Pastoral Charge

**Financial Implications if known:** nil

**Staffing Implications if known:** this proposal will require limited staff time to prepare a remit – to amend Manual sections B.3.7.2 & B.3.7.3

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Manitou Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- a) **Enable active adherents of United Church congregations, on the approval of a majority of congregational members, to participate fully in the governance of their pastoral charges, including voting on spiritual as well as financial, administrative, and pastoral relations matters.**
- b) **Authorize a category 2 remit to test the will of the church with respect to this change.**

### **Background:**

Active adherents often experience a sense of full membership at their local United Church until an occasion arises when they are not permitted to vote. To transfer membership from an ancestral congregation would be to unnecessarily turn one's back on an important part of their heritage and people.

The Annual Congregational meeting of Katrine United Church on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014, voted unanimously to support the request that all active adherents of The United Church of Canada, have the ability to vote on all matters including Pastoral Relations that come before the church. This request assumes that a congregation's governing structure would decide who is an active adherent in any given congregation.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

- transmitted with concurrence by Katrine United Church (February 9, 2014)
- transmitted with concurrence by The Burks Falls Pastoral Charge (April 7, 2014)
- transmitted with concurrence by North Bay Presbytery (Nov. 22, 2014)
- transmitted with concurrence by Manitou Conference (May 2015)

## **TOR 12 REVIEW OF BASIS OF UNION, SECTION 11**

**Origin:** Louise Mahood

**Financial Implications if known:** part of the mandate of an existing committee

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of funding:**

**Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council instruct its Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, or other appropriate group, to undertake a broad based and theological review of the Basis of Union part Eleven (11) which deals with the preamble and questions, posed as persons are ordained or commissioned, to ensure their continued relevancy and effectiveness as we move forward in support of our ministry leaders.**

### **Background:**

From time to time in our 90 years the questions asked at ordination / commissioning have been amended to meet changes in our cultural and theological outlook. It is time to consider this again.

In light of dramatic changes, intentional and unintentional, currently underway in our church, we need to ensure that our future ministry leadership meets the challenge of change.

This action is requested in light of...

- the perception that there is a wide spectrum of theological outlook in our church;
- the perception that what is taught in our theological colleges is not always what is heard from our pulpits;
- recent events in London and Toronto Conferences relating to how particular ministry personnel publicly express their theological outlook; and
- our now more extensive "statement of doctrine," in both prose and poetic form, all honoured deeply in our church.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**MOTION BY:** Louise Mahood/Karen Hilfman-Millson

**MOTION**

**CARRIED.**

## **HAM 5 REVIEW OF THE BASIS OF UNION, SECTION 11**

**Origin: Hamilton Conference**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Hamilton Conference requests the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

**instruct the Executive of the General Council to undertake a broad based and theological review of the Basis of Union part Eleven (11) which deals with the preamble and questions, posed as persons are ordained or commissioned, to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness as we move forward in support of our ministry leaders.**

### **Background**

From time to time in our 90 years the questions asked at ordination / commissioning have been amended to meet changes in our cultural and theological outlook. It is time to consider this again.

In light of dramatic changes, intentional and unintentional, currently underway in our church, we need to ensure that our future ministry leadership meets the challenge of change;

In light of the perception that there is a wide spectrum of theological outlook in our church;

In light of the perception that what is taught in our theological colleges is not always what is heard from our pulpits;

In light of recent events in London and Toronto Conferences relating to how particular ministry personnel publicly express their theological outlook;

In light of our now more extensive "statement of doctrine," in both prose and poetic form, all honoured deeply in our church;

### **BE IT RESOLVED THAT**

Hamilton Conference request the General Council to instruct its Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, or other appropriate group, to undertake a broad based and theological review of the Basis of Union part Eleven (11) which deals with the preamble and questions, posed as persons are ordained or commissioned, to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness as we move forward in support of our ministry leaders.

offered by Paul Currie, Erie Presbytery

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence

## **ANW 5 JUSTICE WITHIN THE NEW COMPENSATION MODEL**

**Origin: St. Paul Presbytery**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes:**

**That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to address, as a matter of urgency, the justice issue caused by the differences in pension that will arise because of the New Compensation Model; and**

**That the General Council direct the Executive of the General Council to seek to redress this situation as a matter of urgency.**

### **Background:**

The pension for ministry personnel is calculated at 140% of minimum salary. Under the old model of compensation the pension of the ministry personnel would not have been dependent on the locale of their ministry.

With the change to the New Compensation model the cost of living group in which the ministry has been assigned will largely determine the quantity of pension that will be received upon retirement. This means that those ministry personnel in smaller or rural contexts, or in those with a lower cost of living categorization, will receive a lower pension for the same faithful service at the end of their ministry. This means there will be an implicit disadvantage for ministry personnel to accept an appointment or call in the rural context. Also this will negatively impact the ability of small and/or rural Pastoral Charges and congregations to be competitive to attract and retain paid accountable ministry.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

## **BQ 5 CORRECTING THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF THE NOVEMBER 2010 APPROVED MATERNITY AND PARENTAL LEAVE POLICIES PROPOSAL**

**Origin:** Westbrook United Church Bay of Quinte Conference

**Financial Implications:** During approved maternity leaves and/or parental leaves, this proposal will reduce and/or nullify the negative monetary impacts of such leaves on the finances of small pastoral charges. If the costs are borne by the National Office in the form of an insurance plan benefit, there will be costs, yet to be determined.

**Staffing Implications:** This initiative requires research and implementation time by the staff and members of various bodies including the Finance Committee and the Permanent Committee of the Ministry and Employment Policies and Services.

**Source of Funding:** it is proposed that new funding for an Approved Maternity or Parental Leave be created and that the application for new funding be sent to the Ministry and Employment Services Unit.

**The Pastoral Charge of Westbrook in Kingston proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to take active steps to correct the unintended consequences stemming from the implementation of the 2010 Approved Maternity and Parental Leave Policies.**

### **Background:**

In November 2010, The United Church of Canada (UCC) approved maternity and parental leave policies. These policies supported employees of the United Church in their work and family life, and recognized "the unique situation brought about by new parenthood."

The policies were aligned with government insurance plans and provided for a salary payment equal to 95 percent of an employee's weekly rate of pay during the qualifying two-week period to receive maternity or parental leave benefits under the government insurance plan and for a salary top-up to 95 percent of an employee's salary up to 15 weeks for maternity leave and up to 10 weeks for parental leave.

In approving these policies, the UCC sought to follow the best practices of Canadian employers who choose to support their employees in their choice to become parents and facilitated parental care of a new family member and the early bonding among all family members. Social science research over many decades had documented the benefits of maternity and parental leaves to families and to society more generally.

In approving these policies, the UCC honoured the sanctity of family life and demonstrated its commitment to be a good employer. These general goals conjoined with a commitment to serve

affiliated pastoral charges and supported congregational life through faithful and effective ministry.

Anecdotal information, based on the recent experience of a small number of pastoral charges in Four Winds Presbytery suggests, however, that the implementation of the 2010 maternity and parental leave policies has had serious and unintended consequences for both ministry staff and pastoral charges. These included serious conflict within the pastoral charge--among members of the pastoral charge and between ministry staff and the pastoral charge--before and/or during the employee's leave and continuing on the employee's return to work. Such conflicts have led to irreparably broken relationships within the pastoral charge and threatened the very survival of the pastoral charge.

A healthy relationship between a minister and his or her pastoral charge is a deeply personal one. That is why the news of a new baby is exciting not only to the prospective parent(s) but also for the pastoral charge. It is an event to be shared and celebrated. This excitement may be mitigated by the anticipated and inevitable disruptions in congregational life resulting from the absence of an employee who is seen as central to the ministry within the pastoral charge and its role in the larger community of faith.

Such natural concerns may be significantly aggravated, and potentially divisive, when the responsibility on the pastoral charge to pay salary top-up costs and 50 percent benefit costs for an employee on leave, in addition to salary and benefit costs for replacement personnel, are seen to threaten the financial viability and the very survival of the pastoral charge itself. For small congregations, particularly in rural and remote areas, what is seen as a personal cause for celebration is tempered by concern for the potential risk and loss of the pastoral community.

In many organizations, the salary and benefit costs incurred for employees on maternity and parental leave are carried by the central corporate unit. These costs distributed across the organization. In such situations the financial "risk" of these additional employee costs is borne by the full corporate entity on behalf of all employees across individual units. This reduces the vulnerability of any particular unit within the corporate entity to the sudden and significant demand on limited resources. In such organizations, this strategy functions like an insurance plan just as the Employment Insurance does. It provides benefits to anyone who experiences the "risk" of unemployment, including childbirth and new parenthood, through the contributions of all employees.

*\*\*In the United Church of Canada, the costs of a private and individual decision to choose to become a parent is currently and wholly borne by a smaller unit, the congregation/pastoral charge, regardless of its capacity to pay! Under the terms of a policy designed and implemented by the National Office, this is unfair and resentment may be directed to an employee whose private decision to become a parent requires the pastoral charge to solely bear the financial burden of this decision, whatever their capacity to do so, and carry on essential pastoral work.*  
\*\*

In Four Winds Presbytery (the former Kingston Presbytery), members of the Ministry Facilitation Action Team (MFAT) share responsibility to support, oversee and mediate pastoral

relations between called ministry staff and the lay leadership serving the pastoral charge. With deep sadness, the MFAT (Ministry Facilitation Action Team) has seen the painful and irreparable breakdown of pastoral relationships as the financial responsibility to meet often unbudgeted expenses for replacement staff is considered unfair and even punitive, when a minister chooses new parenthood and quite appropriately accesses the maternity and parental benefits to which they are entitled. In such cases, the pastoral charge finds itself in the position of dealing with a challenge for which it may have neither the tools or the resources.

On December 9th, 2014, the Ministry Facilitation Action Team (MFAT) received notice of a motion passed by Westbrook United Church. The motion approved at a meeting of the Official Board of the Westbrook pastoral charge on October 14th, 2014, calls for:

consideration to be given to creating a financial assistance fund administered by the National Church, that would provide support to small congregations experiencing financial hardship during maternity or parental leaves of the ministry personnel. While the monetary issues are important, failure to recognize the human factors and the impact on the future of the church to support and mentor ministers of child-bearing/rearing years will have serious consequences such as:

1. The present system whereby small pastoral charges are solely responsible to pay these leaves is inherently unfair and stressful to both the congregation and the minister;
2. Continuance of the present system means that small congregations will be extremely reluctant to hire ministers of child-rearing or child-bearing years due to the financial hardship of paying both leave and pulpit supply/short-term appointment simultaneously,
3. It may restrict searches to older, retired ordained and designated lay ministers which would be a loss for those congregations of the vitality of a youthful minister, and therefore, furthermore, a loss to the United Church of Canada.

Knowing the circumstances which have prompted the Official Board of Westbrook United Church, the MFAT was very sympathetic to their request, and recognized the proposal that the National Office provide financial assistance to small congregations experiencing financial hardship during parental leaves of the ministry personnel is one possible option, to address a failing of the 2010 design and implementation of maternity and parental leave policies.

This proposal honours several important and complementary principles:

1. to act as a supportive, encouraging employer in order to support their ministry personnel,
2. to support UCC pastoral charges to serve members in their faithful communities of faith,
3. and lastly, to sustain and grow our church,.

The Four Winds MFAT requests that Kingston Presbytery and the Bay of Quinte Conference recommend to the National Office and the next General Council that a change in its maternity and parental leave policies be undertaken, to reduce the financial obligation of small congregations during such leaves. This action will reduce the potential risk of conflict within



pastoral charges/communities of faith, so that the church as a whole can satisfy its responsibilities to employees and the pastoral community.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

October 14, 2014 motion approved at a meeting of the Official Board of the Westbrook pastoral charge.

December 9th, 2014, the MFAT(Ministry Facilitation Action Team) received notice of this motion passed by Westbrook United Church.

Moved By Tom Holmes, Seconded by Marg Goodwin  
That Bay of Quinte does not concur with this proposal: Carried

Moved By Paul Reid, Seconded by Marg Goodwin  
That this proposal be transmitted to General Council 42 with recommendation that there be a review of both policies. Carried

## **TOR 6 SHARING OF RESOURCES**

**Origin:** Toronto Conference Executive

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) adopt policies and procedures that allow for sharing of resources and greater financial equity across the church when church properties are sold.**

### **Background:**

In 2014 Toronto Conference convened a consultation on the use of assets realized from the sale of church property. Generally, when properties are sold within the Greater Toronto Area, the sale price can be in the millions of dollars. The consultation struggled with how these resources can be shared across the church when there is such a financial inequality between the various parts of the church.

The consultation recommended and the Conference Executive agreed that the General Council should consider a proposal to more faithfully distribute funds throughout the church in a manner that does not favour the Conferences and/or presbyteries that are financially wealthy because of their geographic location. The consultation suggested three routes to achieve this goal: an equalization program (have vs. have-nots); grants to allow other people from other Conferences to access from the wealthier Conferences; a national fund that all Conferences contribute to on the same percentage from the sale of property and then a larger decision-making group to decide how best to allocate.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Motion passed by Toronto Conference Executive (February 11, 2015) to forward proposal to Toronto Conference Annual Meeting.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

## **M&O 12 RESOURCE SHARING**

**Originating Body:** Consistoire Laurentien

**Financial implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing implications if known:** Unknown

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council:**

- 1) Adopt a clear principle for the sharing of human and property resources between wealthy and disadvantaged communities of faith at the national, regional and local levels;**
- 2) Create a task group to define the mechanisms for sharing and arbitration.**

### **Background:**

This is to ensure that the church itself lives and practises what it teaches about sharing and justice in accordance with the recorded witness of the first Christian communities:

*“All the believers were together and had everything in common.<sup>45</sup> They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.<sup>46</sup> Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,<sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.” Acts 2:44-47*

It is understood that the goal of the Comprehensive Review is first and foremost the renewal and transformation of our church. Such a transformation of both the spiritual and material dimensions cannot take hold unless it is founded on a basis of sharing as taught by Jesus and in the Gospels.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Consistoire Laurentien voted concurrence.

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **HAM 7 INITIATING COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF PROPERTY & MONIES HELD IN TRUST AT ALL LEVEL OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

**Origin:** Laurie White, Diaconal Minister, St. Andrew's United Church, Hamilton, Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Proposed by Laurie White, Diaconal Minister, St. Andrew's United Church, Hamilton, Ontario that:**

**When considering "United in God's Work" – the Report of the Comprehensive Review – the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council make the review process truly comprehensive by initiating a review of all financial and property holdings, in order to determine and recommend how these resources might be made available for the ongoing mission and ministry of The United Church of Canada.**

### **Background:**

At the outset of the Comprehensive Review process, we were assured by Nora Sanders, General Secretary of the General Council of The United Church of Canada, that "everything would be on the table". "Everything".

Now, with the release of the final report, it seems that "everything" was not on the table, as there is no mention at all about property or financial resources held in trust by pastoral charges, presbyteries, Conferences or The United Church of Canada.

It appears that "everything" referred only to matters affecting personnel, and administrative structure.

There is no direction or insight, nor are there courageous recommendations, or creative leadership offered regarding how our United Church of Canada, at all levels, might faithfully use property and financial resources held in trust. There is no call or vision articulated regarding this. The report is disappointingly silent on this crucial issue. Now is the time to be bold, and truly put everything on the table.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence



## **ANW 17 REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS**

**Origin:** Alberta and Northwest Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Alberta and Northwest Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council 2015:**

- 1. Support a long-term global emission reduction goal consistent with the Paris agreement;**
- 2. Recognize that a major portion of the Canadian economy produces products that generate carbon emissions such as electricity, transportation, manufacturing, mining, and production of oil and gas;**
- 3. Remember:**
  - a. the impact on the overall economy of Canada;**
  - b. the impact on the individuals employed (families) in the various industries noted above;**
  - c. the impact on the communities and communities of faith throughout Canada;**
- 4. Encourage investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency; and**
- 5. Encourage investment in training, and job creation.**
- 6. Direct the Executive of the General Council to take appropriate action to implement this policy.**

### **Background:**

There is a general concern with climate change.

The Church has participated in a request to G7 Finance Ministers through Investor Group on Climate Change to recognize that “additional investment is needed and this requires well-designed policies that shift incentives from high to low carbon and climate resilient investment and ensures the deployment of available technologies, while achieving a just transition for workers and communities.”

## **BC 4 LOBBYING GOVERNMENTS FOR A PRICE ON GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

**Origin:** Kootenay Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) commit the church to lobby federal and provincial governments to implement an economy-wide price on greenhouse gas emissions where currently such a price does not exist.**

### **Background**

The Earth's climate is changing at an unprecedented rate and human activity is overwhelmingly responsible. Increased risk of droughts, floods, tropical storms, and altered weather patterns threatens to displace more people and lead to increasing numbers of civil wars and international conflict. People living in poverty and Indigenous populations, including here in Canada, are made especially vulnerable to climate chaos. The people and countries responsible for the majority of historic heat-trapping pollution are least likely to bear the brunt of the changes.

Conversely, the people and countries least responsible for causing climate chaos are most likely to experience increasing levels of disease, displacement, and conflict. Climate chaos is a justice issue with which every follower of Jesus and every person of faith should be concerned. Ocean acidification, also caused by carbon dioxide emissions, is another area of major concern.

The majority of experts, academics, non-governmental organizations, and others engaged in climate justice recognize pricing greenhouse gas emissions as pertinent to slowing and ultimately reversing current trends toward climate catastrophe. Carbon taxes and cap-and-trade systems stand as two effective methods of putting a price on carbon to signal the need to reduce emissions. British Columbia's carbon tax is often celebrated on the world stage as fair, effective, and efficient. Quebec has implemented a cap-and-trade system and Ontario is in the process of following suit, in concert with California. Alberta's carbon tax applies to large final emitters but is not economy-wide. Nova Scotia is considering applying a price to carbon emissions. While these initiatives are significant and laudable, Canada suffers from a dearth of leadership on the climate file at the federal level, and too many provinces currently show no sign of pricing carbon.

This proposal would see The United Church of Canada (UCC) undertake an effort to lobby elected representatives in jurisdictions where an economy-wide price on carbon does not exist. This would apply to all provinces except BC, Quebec, and Ontario (assuming Ontario's cap-and-trade efforts succeed). It would apply to inter-jurisdictional travel, which is often exempt from carbon pricing mechanisms. It would also apply to all federal government activities.

Jesus of Nazareth addressed the injustices he witnessed head-on and with love. The UCC has a history of solid political engagement for the sake of justice and environmental sustainability. This proposal would prioritize the climate as an area for the UCC's lobbying efforts, recognizing that prioritizing lobbying effectively bears particular importance for charities, which must limit lobbying efforts, and which can be audited at the whim of the governing party.

Pricing greenhouse gas emissions is fiscally efficient. It provides revenues for public expenditures by discouraging harmful activity. Most significantly, BC has proven that pricing carbon reduces emissions quickly, thus allowing us to live into our responsibilities to creation and marginalized people.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference



## **BC 8 TRAVEL CARBON TAX**

**Origin: Kootenay Presbytery**

**Financial Implications if known: Initially approximately \$0.50 / 100km of travel**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council create policy whereby travel claims related to the business of The United Church of Canada be subject to a carbon tax to be determined by General Council Executive with revenues directed to The United Church of Canada's Mission and Service Fund. The court receiving the claim pays the tax.**

### **Background**

The Earth's climate is changing at an unprecedented rate and human activity is overwhelmingly responsible. Increased risk of droughts, floods, tropical storms, and altered weather patterns threatens to displace more people and lead to increasing numbers of civil wars and international conflict. People living in poverty and indigenous populations, including here in Canada, are made especially vulnerable to climate chaos. The people and countries responsible for the majority of historic heat-trapping pollution are least likely to bear the brunt of the changes.

Conversely, the people and countries least responsible for causing climate chaos are most likely to experience increasing levels of disease, displacement, and conflict. Climate chaos is a justice issue with which every follower of Jesus and every person of faith should be concerned. Ocean acidification, also caused by carbon dioxide emissions, is another area of major concern.

Travel is a major contributor of heat-trapping greenhouse gases. Air travel is especially harmful because it is fuel intensive, it cannot yet be fueled on a large scale by renewable sources, and the emissions occurs high in the atmosphere. Other forms of travel are also carbon-intensive because of Canada's fossil fuel-based infrastructure system. The United Church of Canada activities, such as pastoral visits and meetings of all four courts tend to require a high amount of travel. Video conferencing, tele conferencing, conducting business remotely such as over email or social media are all gaining popularity within the denomination; however, travel continues to contribute significantly to the denomination's greenhouse gas footprint.

This proposal seeks to reduce the amount of travel for church-related business and to compensate for the harm incurred by fossil fuel-intensive travel. A "tax" levied on travel will serve as additional incentive to find alternatives to carbon-intensive travel. It will encourage would-be travelers to discern whether travel is truly necessary. It will also encourage the technological upgrades that might be necessary for modes of communication like video conferencing. It will also shore up the revenues of the Mission and Service Fund, some of which address the impacts of a changing climate.

The travel carbon tax would apply only to travel that is reimbursable and when the traveler is completing an expense claim form anyway. Thus, administering the travel carbon tax would be relatively simple, and equal in simplicity to general reimbursement. All courts of the denomination would need to modify travel expense claim forms to account for the travel carbon tax. When completing their travel expense claim forms, travelers would apply a constant emissions factor based on the mode (eg. Personal vehicle, rail bus, air, etc.). Alternatively, for greater accuracy, travelers could apply that vehicle's actual fuel efficiency (based on the vehicle's internal computer) or estimated fuel efficiency (based on the manufacturer's specifications or [www.fueleconomy.gov](http://www.fueleconomy.gov)). The tax would begin at \$30/tonne and increase by \$10/tonne each triennium, until reaching a cap of \$50/tonne. A flight from Vancouver to Toronto, for example, would initially cost an additional \$17.60 and increase to \$29.30 by 2018. A drive in a compact car from Corner Brook to St John's, NL would initially cost an additional \$4.00 and increase to an additional \$6.60 by 2018.

Revenues from the travel carbon tax would be directed to the Mission and Service Fund. The revenues may then be used to further encourage carbon reductions, or to provide technological upgrades necessary for other modes of communication, or other initiatives at the discretion of the General Council.

The United Church of Canada has spoken prophetically and frequently about climate justice. It continues to be complicit in climate chaos largely because of Canada's system of fossil fuel infrastructure. It now has an opportunity to put its "own house in order" and model responsible climate policy for the federal government and provincial governments. With that added credibility, the denomination's calls for climate leadership would bear greater significance.

**Intermediate Court Action:**  
Agreement from BC Conference

## **TOR 3 FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE**

**Origin:** Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** The proposal is intended to be revenue-neutral but may lead to increased or decreased returns. Forecasting the financial implications is very difficult.

**Staffing Implications if known:** Research and implementation time from the staff and members of various bodies including the United Church of Canada Foundation and the Finance Committee of the General Council Executive, as well as from the Chief Financial Officer.

**Source of Funding if known:** Existing investments (revenue-neutral)

**Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- a) **Encourage\* The United Church of Canada Foundation and direct the Executive of the General Council to take active steps to sell their holdings in the 200 largest fossil fuel companies;**
- b) **Direct the General Secretary of General Council to encourage United Church members to use less fossil fuels.**

**Background:**

*(This proposal contains the information from Proposals PGC #5A, PGC #5B and PGC #5C submitted by Bathurst United Pastoral Charge, Trinity-St. Paul's Pastoral Charge, Toronto Southeast Presbytery, and the Social Justice and World Affairs Committee of South West Presbytery.)*

Today the balance of life on Earth is threatened by climate change. Changes in global temperature and precipitation patterns threaten water flow regimes, ocean ecosystems, sea levels, agricultural climates, weather patterns, biodiversity, and ecological functions on which human and all other life depends.

Ironically and unjustly, the global south and indigenous populations worldwide are the most susceptible to climatic chaos and the least responsible for causing it. Indigenous communities, on whose territories fossil fuel extractive industries are developed, suffer devastating impacts on their environment, habitat, health, and cultures. Not to mention the constant violation of their constitutional rights and treaties in Canada, and human rights in other parts of the world. In Canada, indigenous communities face the Canadian government's very weak record of respecting Aboriginal rights and title, and its denial that their right to prior, free, and informed consent (as set out in UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People) could actually mean the right to say "no."

The United Church of Canada is complicit in global climate chaos through its investments in fossil fuel companies. This complicity is inconsistent with our call to live with respect in

creation, which means ensuring global ecological integrity, and with our call to follow Jesus, who advocated for marginalized, vulnerable populations and called for a restructuring of a disordered unjust economic system. It is time again to align our financial assets with our spiritual assets by living out our many policy statements (see below), and by divesting from the top 200 fossil fuel companies (as identified by Carbon Tracker). Trinity-St. Paul's United Church has taken this step and calls on The United Church of Canada to do the same. Bathurst United Church on principle holds its savings in a Credit Union which they are currently in conversation to ensure that they do not invest in the Tar Sands.

The United Church of Canada has a significant history of work and policy statements that are background for this motion and that have called us for over two decades to act:

In 1992, General Council (GC) adopted the *One Earth Community* policy paper which acknowledged our complicity as humans in the destruction of the streams and seas, the soil, and the forests, and asserted that “we are at a major turning point at which we can either continue along the path of self-destruction, or turn toward restoration and renewal”. It further affirmed that: “We must make institutions accountable to the people whose lives they touch”... and “must restructure economic institutions so that they serve the needs of the poor and function in harmony with ecological reality.” This was followed by 12 key ethical principles to guide the church's work on ecological issues, including economic justice, human responsibility, sustainable lifestyles, the protection of biodiversity, and ensuring the rights of future generations.

In 2000 General Council adopted *Energy in the One Earth Community*, which called us to move beyond dependence on fossil fuels and other technologies that produce emissions leading to climate change.

In 2009, General Council adopted *The United Church of Canada and Global warming—The Unavoidable Challenge* which was taken as a priority in The Moderator's Plan for participating in God's Abundant Healing of Creation.

Current church work, much done ecumenically through KAIROS and the World Council of Churches (WCC), as well as recent statements from the UCC Moderator, accompanied by audio tapes from four past and present moderators, highlight the urgency of taking action on this issue, and on the theological and moral reasons for doing so. In July 2014, the WCC decided to pull its investments out of fossil fuel companies.

In September 2014, over 80 leaders, including some United Church of Canada theologians, issued a *Statement from Theologians, Ethicists and Religious Leaders in support of fossil fuel divestment and clean energy reinvestment by faith communities*. They state: “For more than two decades, talented leaders—including legislative and shareholder activities – have implored political and industry leaders to act. Their sound reasoning and humanity's best interests have been subverted by the vast influence of the fossil fuel industry, a massively profitable and influential collection of firms and states... Because of the grave threat of climate change and the fossil fuel sector's unyielding refusal to change, it is no longer right for religious groups to profit from companies that, with certainty are creating ecological destruction and human suffering on such a titanic scale.”

It is no longer a matter for debate. Our church has spoken loudly for over two decades about the problem and about the need for action. Moving the United Church Foundation's \$\$\$\$ (XXX% of assets) and the Treasury's \$\$\$\$ (XXXX% of assets) away from the 200 largest fossil fuel companies represents a unique opportunity for the church to live faithfully in the midst of empire.

**NOTE:** \* The wording of this proposal has been changed because we can encourage but not direct The United Church Foundation to take action.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**MOTION by David Allen/Ann Harbridge that Toronto Conference propose that the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the United Church of Canada Foundation and the United Church of Canada Treasury to take active steps to sell their holdings in the 200 largest fossil fuel companies;**

**And direct the General Secretary of General Council to encourage United Church members to use less fossil fuels.**

**MOTION**

**CARRIED.**

## **BC 6 GREEN RENEWABLE ENERGY INVESTMENT**

**Origin:** Kootenay Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Depends on rates of return of current investments and proposed reinvestments (the proposal could be financially advantageous or disadvantageous).

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council instruct the Executive of the General Council and encourage\* The United Church of Canada Foundation to take active steps to use assets made available by divesting from fossil fuel companies to invest in green renewable energy co-operatives.**

### **Background**

Canada and the world must immediately transition to a green renewable energy system to avert climate catastrophe and live into the abundant life of which Jesus spoke. Selling fossil fuel-based assets to morally bankrupt fossil fuel companies is an important step toward this transition. Another important step toward the transition to abundant life is investing in green renewable energy cooperatives.

The co-operative model of ownership stands as an anti-dote to harmful forms of greedy capitalism and economic disparity, which the Bible denounces more frequently than any other social concern.

Investment can take the form of member-ownership, bonds, and others. At present Ontario and Nova Scotia offer the best opportunities for investing in green renewable energy cooperatives. SolarShare and ZooShare, both based in Ontario, are green energy bonds that are available for purchase to any individual or business (including churches) registered in Ontario. The United Church of Canada would be eligible to participate in these cooperatives by virtue of being based in Ontario.

Green renewable energy can include solar, wind, biomass, tidal, wave, hydro, and other forms. Some forms of renewable energy are not environmentally or socially benign. Investing in companies designated as “renewable energy companies,” therefore, does not ensure an improvement over alternate forms of investment. Renewable energy co-operatives in Canada tend to conform to the highest environmental and social standards available, so investing in co-operatively owned energy projects is the preferred way to ensure renewable energy projects are also environmentally beneficial.

The United Church of Canada’s *A New Creed* espouses living with respect in creation, seeking justice, and resisting evil, following the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ. It has declared climate justice a priority and has spoken prophetically in the face of the failures to address climate chaos and economic injustice. The United Church of Canada now has an unprecedented opportunity to facilitate the transition to lower impact sources of energy in

ways that support social justice. Investing in green renewable energy cooperatives is consistent with its faith statements and, furthermore, imperative in light of the theology and ecological theology expressed in A New Creed.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

\*The word “encourage” was added by the Business Committee because the General Council does not have the authority to instruct The Foundation.

## **MTU 2 FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT FOR EARTH JUSTICE**

**Origin:** North Bay Presbytery Mission Committee

**Financial Implications if known:** The proposal is intended to be revenue neutral but may lead to increased or decreased financial returns.

**Staffing Implications if known:** Research and implementation time from staff and members of various bodies including The United Church of Canada Foundation and the Finance Committee of the General Council Executive as well as from the Chief Financial Officer

### **Manitou Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General and The United Church of Canada to sell their holding in fossil fuel companies and reinvest funds in companies producing clean renewable energy.**

### **Background:**

As the Conference of the Great Spirit – Gitchi Manitou – we affirm the following:

All life is sacred and as people of faith we are called to protect and preserve the land, the water, and the creatures for future generations. We will live with respect in creation.

As Keepers of the Cairn site of the UCC Apology in Sudbury to First Peoples in 1986, we uphold and commit to live the words of our apology that Right Relations with First Peoples and this Holy Land inform and guide our actions.

As people of the boreal forest we share this vast territory with First Nations peoples bound by the covenant of the Treaties (Treaty #9, Robinson Huron Treaty, Williams Treaty) that resources will be shared and preserved for future generations.

We acknowledge our past failures to protect the land through resource extraction practices that have in some places left the land scarred, the water polluted and the air fouled. We take to heart the call for repentance and our desire to live in a way that protects and preserves the earth which cries out for justice.

We acknowledge the time is now for earth and climate justice. We hear the warning of the UN IPCC (International Panel on Climate Change) calling for immediate action to move to a low carbon economy and zero emissions of carbon dioxide and other long-lived greenhouse gases by the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in order to mitigate “the likelihood of severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts for people and ecosystems.” (*UNIPCC Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*)

We hear (80) brothers and sisters in Christ who urge us to divest from fossil fuels and reinvest in clean renewable energy. (*Divest and Reinvest Now – A Statement from Theologians, Ethicists and Religious Leaders in support of fossil fuel divestment and*



*clean energy reinvestment by faith communities*) We affirm the climate crisis is a spiritual and moral issue calling for a spiritual and moral response.

We take encouragement from the World Council of Churches and the United Church of Christ who have made decisions to divest from fossil fuels.

We acknowledge the hardship on workers in the fossil fuel industry as we plan for a transition to a zero-carbon economy. We agree...now is the time to plan for a “just transition” for oil and gas workers that includes income supports and skills training. (*Just Transition – Creating a green social contract for BC’s resource workers. - CCPA Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives - January 2015*)

We lament that our government has promoted fossil fuel extraction through legislation and tax subsidies and has failed to address the crisis of climate change, failing Canadian citizens from coast to coast to coast. Enough!

We have spoken out against the expansion of the Alberta oil sands enabled by the Trans Canada Energy East pipeline proposal. We note that the expanded oil production will lead to an increase in GHG emissions (*Climate Implications of the Proposed Energy East Pipeline –Pembina Institute- February 2014*) and the pipeline proposal will pose a threat to water, land and communities along the 4000km route. (*OEB - Ontario Energy Board Community Consultation April 2014. Submission from North Bay Presbytery available on OEB website.*)

We remember who and whose we are in our call to divest from fossil fuels...*and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8*

**Intermediate Court Action:**

- transmitted with concurrence by North Bay Presbytery (Spring 2015)
- transmitted with concurrence by Manitou Conference (May 2015)

## **MNWO 8 ASSESSMENT OF FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE**

**Origin:** Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:** Staff time is the only financial implication known at this time.

**Staffing Implications if known:** A considerable time (amount unknown) from various bodies, including The United Church of Canada Pension Board

**Source of Funding if known:** Pension Fund Administration and General Revenue

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

**Direct that the Executive of the General Council request the Pension Board to report publicly to pension plan members and General Council on:**

- i. the Board's assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the Christian imperatives of seeking justice, resisting evil, and living with respect in Creation; and**
- ii. the Board's assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the report entitled, *Socially Responsible Investment and Resource Extraction*, dated June 28, 2013, and prepared by the working group of the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry; and**
- iii. the Pension Fund's exposure to investments in fossil fuels; and**
- iv. the Board's rationale for investing in the 200 largest fossil fuel companies given:**
  - a. the risk of stranded assets, and**
  - b. the possibility of equal or better returns from divesting these stocks and investing in other stocks.**

### **Background:**

Climate change is beginning to threaten our planet and all its systems on a global scale as both droughts and floods increase the threat of famine, violence and war and increase dramatically the number of displaced persons and climate change migrants.

Continuing on the current economic path imposes collective costs of adapting to change which will be enormously higher than the cost of changing course to reduce demand for energy and to develop alternative carbon-free sources of energy.

Astonishing progress is being made in the generation of electricity by other means than burning carbon at the same time that climate researchers are telling us that limiting the expected increase in global temperature will require leaving up to 80% (and even more) of known reserves of coal, natural gas, and petroleum in the ground, stranding these assets of the fossil fuel industry.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

## **TOR 4 PENSION FUND PROPOSAL**

**Origin:** Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to request the United Church of Canada Pension Board to report publicly to pension plan members and General Council on:**

- (i) the Board’s assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the Christian imperatives of seeking justice, resisting evil, and living with respect in creation;**
- (ii) the Board’s assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the report entitled “Socially Responsible Investment and Resource Extraction”, dated June 28, 2013, and prepared by the working group of the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry;**
- (iii) the Pension Fund’s exposure to investments in fossil fuels;**
- (iv) the Board’s rationale for investing in the 200 largest fossil fuel companies given (a) the risks of stranded assets, and (b) the possibility of equal or better returns on divesting these stocks.**

### **Background:**

*(This proposal contains the information from Proposals PGC #6A, PGC #6B submitted by Bathurst United Pastoral Charge and Trinity-St. Paul’s Pastoral Charge, Toronto Southeast Presbytery.)*

Changes to the global climate threaten our planet and all its systems on a global scale. Intensifying droughts, floods, and desertification, will increase the threat of famine, war and violence, and these will dramatically increase the number of displaced persons and climate change migrants. The changes threaten the entire ecology of many environments, including the oceans due to acidification and heating. Continuing on our current path imposes collective costs of adapting to change which are enormously higher than costs of changing course to reduce demand for energy and develop alternative, carbon-free sources, and are also enormously more than the income generated by business as usual. These changes will require the United Church to raise funds to assist partners after disasters, and increase costs on future pensioners to adapt to changing climate and environment into the future.

Ironically and unjustly, the global south is the most susceptible to climatic chaos and the least responsible for causing it. Indigenous populations around the world, including indigenous

peoples in all parts of Canada face disproportionate risks from these changes, and great impact from the extraction and transportation of fossil fuels from and through their lands, all too often carried out without Free, Prior Informed Consent (FPIC). Such actions by the companies and the companion actions (and inactions) of government are a violation of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, signed by the Government of Canada, and conflict with the commitment of The United Church of Canada to seek right relations with indigenous peoples. This failure to implement FPIC builds a further huge debt to be repaid to first nations as partial restoration of the broken lands and lives left behind without their consent. This level of harm should be beyond what the fiduciary duty of the Pension Board to plan members requires or permits.

Increasing numbers of financial advisors and international experts are identifying the risk of stranding fossil fuel reserves as policy shifts to recognize these assets as un-burnable - creating a “carbon bubble.” However, the public reports of major fossil fuel companies indicate that they plan to extract and burn their “assets” – and they expect neither engagement nor public policies to change their plans. Instead they are accelerating the emissions and their impact. These commitments do not permit effective shareholder engagement, and the urgency of the problems mean we must seek other ways to respond. Continuing to hold the stocks and bonds of these companies seems incompatible with the mission of the church and the fiduciary responsibilities of the Pension Board.

We live in hope that peoples’ actions and resulting changes in public policy will make companies leave up to 80% of their current reserves in the ground – a necessary step to reducing the damage of emissions to the climate, the earth, and the oceans, and all life on the earth. Once enough institutions, municipalities, and individuals sell their fossil fuel holdings, commensurate public policy and corporate action would follow, and those who continue to hold such investments will have the value of those investments reduced. Careful discernment of how the Pension Fund investments fit into the rapidly changing investment environment can reduce the risks to the climate as well as the risks to these investments.

The United Church of Canada is called to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God and to serve as partners in God’s mission, which includes abundant life for all creation. Seeking justice means making fiduciary choices to resist climate chaos and changes to the oceans that threaten populations of peoples and other creatures alike. Climate justice concerns highlight the massive projected impact on the people and countries with the least resources to adapt to this change, which they cannot prevent alone. In 2009, the Executive of the General Council called for additional work on “socially responsible investment” in the Pension Board’s Statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles and terms of reference. This continuing discernment needs to address the increasing risks of holding fossil fuel stocks.

We are not alone in addressing these issues, and effective responses will be collective. The United Church of Canada joined the Carbon Disclosure Initiative in 2007, and the Pension Board should use the new Carbon Tracker tools to assess the Plan’s exposure to carbon-based investments, to assist in planning to reduce or eliminate that associated risk. Signing the UN Principles for responsible investment will support additional collective responses. The United Church Pension

Board should commit to the highest standards of responsible investment, including joining further coalitions as part of the Pension Board's fiduciary responsibilities to plan members.

New options for alternative and positive investments by institutions are appearing every month, and these can offer comparable or better returns at lower risk. Positive reinvestment is a second step that the Pension Board can implement in a diversified asset mix that can sustain and protect the returns of the fund investments and the pensions of plan members, as well as be faithful to the justice mission of the church and of the pension plan members.

In its continuing discernment, The United Church of Canada's Pension Board is fiduciary to plan members. Plan members deserve to be informed of what the Board discerns, including investment beliefs and guiding principles for the class of fossil fuel stocks, associated investment risks in the pension plan assets, and what rationales there are for the evolving choices of pension fund investments. The Pension Board should report its discernment and resulting investment decisions to the plan members and to the wider church through the General Council.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**MOTION**

**CARRIED.**

## **MAR 2 UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA PENSION BOARD DIVESTMENT FROM GOLDCORP**

**Origin: Church in Action Committee, Maritime Conference**

**Financial Implications if known: unknown**

**Staffing Implications if known: unknown**

**Source of Funding if known: unknown**

**Proposed by the Church in Action Committee, Maritime Conference that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015), responding to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitments to partnership and right relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, instructs the General Secretary to communicate to The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.**

### **Background**

*Because of your money, you are complicit. Give your money to something that gives life.*

~ Catholic Parish Committee in Defense of Mother Earth, San Miguel Ixtahuacan Nov. 2013 in meeting with the Mining the Connections/KAIROS Mining Delegation

**We bring this proposal forward as an urgent concern for immediate attention. United Church, KAIROS and Canadian aboriginal partners have urged the UCCPB to publicly divest from Goldcorp.**<sup>i ii</sup> We are acutely aware of the ongoing suffering of indigenous Mayan communities, related to negative environmental, social and health impacts. The presence of the Marlin Mine for a period of more than nine years in Guatemala has resulted in:

- ~ serious environmental damage, especially water contamination<sup>iii</sup>
- ~ disruption of community cohesion and an increase in community conflict
- ~ an increase in domestic violence and family breakdown
- ~ a huge increase in alcohol abuse and sex trade
- ~ a loss of *Mam*, the principal Indigenous language
- ~ an increase in health issues including the spread of HIV/AIDS, skin lesions
- ~ malnutrition among children due to inflated prices for basic products

*The statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles for the Pension Plan of the United Church of Canada (2005) Article 33 states: Socially responsible investment procedures can be employed provided there is reasonable assurance that the best long term interest of the members is being served. The United Church has always affirmed that **respect for human dignity and the well-being of the planet serve the long-term interests of pension plan members.** United Church policies direct that maximizing economic return on investments must give way to economic justice, human rights, and environmental protection.*<sup>iv</sup>

Since 2008 the UCCPB's ethical investment advisor, Jantizi Research (now Sustainalytics) has recommended against inclusion of Goldcorp in the UCCPB portfolio, due to ongoing community conflict. (UCCPB communications to Maritime Conference Mining the Connections Working

Group.)

Goldcorp continues to obtain exploration and exploitation licenses without the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous communities (required by the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, Article 26.)<sup>v</sup> It has obtained licenses in regions where Indigenous communities have voted massively against mining projects in municipal referenda and where Catholic diocesan and parish environmental justice committees are courageously resisting the presence of mining project.<sup>vi</sup> In 2010, the Goldcorp-funded Human Rights Assessment recommended a moratorium on exploration, expansion and conversion of exploration to exploitation licenses, pending effective State involvement in consultation processes. Yet Goldcorp has extended the Marlin Mine underground and plans to develop the nearby Los Chocoyos open-pit mine.

The Cerro Blanco geo-thermal mine near the border with El Salvador threatens the eco-system providing water to 67% of Salvadorans. It was built despite water and soil scientists' warnings of a flawed environmental impact assessment. Goldcorp has suspended mine operations, citing gold prices. However, problems of extremely hot water and unstable soil containing a naturally high level of arsenic remain unresolved. The El Salvador Roundtable on Metallic Mining (UCC partner ADES is a lead member) and El Salvador's Ombudsperson seek the mine's permanent closure.<sup>vii</sup>

The UCCPB contracts SHARE to engage with Goldcorp management. We question this involvement when our partners see no significant change after nearly a decade of management engagement. SHARE's management engagement takes place within a framework of ensuring the long-term value of the company, making it unlikely to take on issues that may reduce Goldcorp's financial value.<sup>vii</sup>

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Sean Handcock/Mary White moved that the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #2 entitled "United Church of Canada Pension Board Divestment from Goldcorp" to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada with a note from Maritime Conference that this be put before the whole General assembly and not be put as part of an omnibus bill.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

<sup>i</sup> United Church, KAIROS partners: Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala, Conference of Evangelical Churches of Guatemala, CEIBA (Association for Community Development and Promotion), ADES (Social and Economic Development Association of Santa Marta, El Salvador), [www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/](http://www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/)

<sup>ii</sup> *Where Our Treasure Is*, <http://marconf.ca/resources/treasure/> Messages from Bishop Ramazzini (Ecumenical Christian Council member) and Catholic parish leader, Sister Maudilia Lopez Cardona. p.9. Letter by a Canadian aboriginal woman, Cathy Gerroir, who has collaborated with the United Church in the Maritimes. p. 15

<sup>iii</sup> National Institute of Forensic Sciences March, 2013 report on government ministries' surface and groundwater samplings near the Marlin mine. Commission on Peace and Ecology [www.ciel.org/Law\\_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd\\_water\\_report%20english.pdf](http://www.ciel.org/Law_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd_water_report%20english.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Examples: The United Church social policy *One Earth Community –Ethical Principles for Environment and Development* (1992), the resource *Mission and Investing: A Guide for The United Church of Canada Congregations and Organizations* (2002),resources that followed from *Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire* (2006) See *Where Our Treasure Is*, p. 15

<sup>v</sup> [issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un\\_declaration\\_rights\\_indigenous\\_peoples](http://issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un_declaration_rights_indigenous_peoples)

<sup>vi</sup> [www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/](http://www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/)

<sup>vii</sup> [www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468](http://www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468) <http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.html>

<sup>viii</sup> Shareholder Association for Research and Education [http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human\\_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf](http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf)



## **TOR 5 UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA PENSION BOARD (UCCPB) DIVESTMENT FROM GOLDCORP**

**Origin: Social Justice and World Affairs Committee, South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference**

**Financial Implications if known: Unknown**

**Staffing Implications if known: Unknown**

**Source of Funding if known: Unknown**

**The Social Justice and World Affairs Committee of South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015), responding to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitments to partnership and right relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, instructs the General Secretary, General Council to communicate to The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.**

### **Background:**

*“Because of your money, you are complicit. Give your money to something that gives life.”*

~ Catholic Parish Committee in Defense of Mother Earth, San Miguel Ixtahuacan Nov. 2013 in meeting with the Mining the Connections/KAIROS Mining Delegation.

We bring this proposal forward as an urgent concern for immediate attention. United Church, KAIROS and Canadian Aboriginal partners have urged the UCCPB to publicly divest from Goldcorp.<sup>1 2</sup> We are acutely aware of the ongoing suffering of indigenous Mayan communities, related to negative environmental, social and health impacts.

The presence of the Marlin Mine for a period of more than nine years in Guatemala has resulted in:

- serious environmental damage, especially water contamination<sup>3</sup>
- disruption of community cohesion and an increase in community
- conflict

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<sup>1</sup> United Church, KAIROS partners: Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala, Conference of Evangelical Churches of Guatemala, CEIBA (Association for Community Development and Promotion), ADES (Social and Economic Development Association of Santa Marta, El Salvador) , [www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/](http://www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/)

<sup>2</sup> *Where Our Treasure Is*, <http://marconf.ca/resources/treasure/> Messages from Bishop Ramazzini (Ecumenical Christian Council member) and Catholic parish leader, Sister Maudilia Lopez Cardona. p.9. Letter by a Canadian aboriginal woman, Cathy Gerroir, who has collaborated with the United Church in the Maritimes. p. 15

<sup>3</sup> National Institute of Forensic Sciences March, 2013 report on government ministries' surface and groundwater samplings near the Marlin mine. Commission on Peace and Ecology  
[www.ciel.org/Law\\_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd\\_water\\_report%20english.pdf](http://www.ciel.org/Law_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd_water_report%20english.pdf)

- an increase in domestic violence and family breakdown
- a huge increase in alcohol abuse and sex trade
- a loss of *Mam*, the principal Indigenous language
- an increase in health issues including the spread of HIV/AIDS, skin lesions
- malnutrition among children due to inflated prices for basic products.

The Statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles for the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada (2005), Article 33 states: “Socially responsible investment procedures can be employed provided there is reasonable assurance that the best long term interest of the members is being served”. The United Church has always affirmed that respect for human dignity and the well-being of the planet serve the long-term interests of pension plan members. United Church policies direct that maximizing economic return on investments must give way to economic justice, human rights, and environmental protection.<sup>4</sup>

Since 2008 the UCCPB’s ethical investment advisor, Jantizi Research (now Sustainalytics) has recommended against inclusion of Goldcorp in the UCCPB portfolio, due to ongoing community conflict.

Goldcorp continues to obtain exploration and exploitation licences without the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous communities (required by the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, Article 26.)<sup>5</sup> It has obtained licences in regions where indigenous communities have voted massively against mining projects in municipal referenda and where Catholic diocesan and parish environmental justice committees are courageously resisting the presence of mining projects.<sup>6</sup> In 2010, the Goldcorp-funded Human Rights Assessment recommended a moratorium on exploration, expansion and conversion of exploration to exploitation licences, pending effective state involvement in consultation processes. Yet Goldcorp has extended the Marlin Mine underground and plans to develop the nearby Los Chocoyos open-pit mine.

The Cerro Blanco geo-thermal mine near the border with El Salvador threatens the eco-system providing water to 67% of Salvadorans. It was built despite water and soil scientists’ warnings of a flawed environmental impact assessment. Goldcorp has suspended mine operations, citing gold prices. However, problems of extremely hot water and unstable soil containing unnaturally high level of arsenic remain unresolved. The El Salvador Roundtable on Metallic Mining (UCC partner ADES is a lead member) and El Salvador's Ombudsperson seek the mine’s permanent

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<sup>4</sup> Examples: The United Church social policy *One Earth Community –Ethical Principles for Environment and Development* (1992), *the resource Mission and Investing: A Guide for The United Church of Canada Congregations and Organizations* (2002),resources that followed from *Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire* (2006) See *Where Our Treasure Is*, p. 15

<sup>5</sup> [issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un\\_declaration\\_rights\\_indigenous\\_peoples](http://issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un_declaration_rights_indigenous_peoples)

<sup>6</sup> [www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/](http://www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/)

closure.<sup>7</sup>

The UCCPB contracts SHARE to engage with Goldcorp management. We question this involvement when our partners see no significant change after nearly a decade of management engagement. SHARE's management engagement takes place within a framework of ensuring the long-term value of the company, making it unlikely to take on issues that may reduce Goldcorp's financial value.<sup>8</sup>

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Received by South West Presbytery (April 18, 2015) and passed on to Toronto Conference and transmitted with concurrence.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

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<sup>7</sup> [www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468](http://www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468)  
<http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.html>

<sup>8</sup> Shareholder Association for Research and Education [http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human\\_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf](http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf)

## **MNWO 7 UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA PENSION BOARD DIVESTMENT FROM GOLDCORP**

**Originating Body:** Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) respond to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitment to partnership and right relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, instruct the General Secretary to communicate to The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.**

### **Background:**

*'Because of your money, you are complicit. Give your money to something that gives life.'*

~ Catholic Parish Committee in Defense of Mother Earth, San Miguel Ixtahuacan Nov. 2013 in meeting with the Mining the Connections/KAIROS Mining Delegation

We bring this proposal forward as an urgent concern for immediate attention. The United Church of Canada, KAIROS and Canadian aboriginal partners have urged the UCCPB to publicly divest from Goldcorp.<sup>(1)(2)</sup> We are acutely aware of the ongoing suffering of indigenous Mayan communities related to negative environmental, social and health impacts. The presence of the Marlin Mine for a period of more than nine years in Guatemala has resulted in:

- i. Serious environmental damage, especially water contamination<sup>(3)</sup>
- ii. Disruption of community cohesion and an increase in community conflict
- iii. An increase in domestic violence and family breakdown
- iv. A huge increase in alcohol abuse and sex trade
- v. A loss of *Mam*, the principal indigenous language
- vi. An increase in health issues including the spread of HIV/AIDS, skin lesions
- vii. Malnutrition among children due to inflated prices for basic products

*The statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles for the Pension Plan of the United Church of Canada (2005) Article 33 states: Socially responsible investment procedures can be employed provided there is reasonable assurance that the best long term interest of the members is being served.* The United Church has always affirmed that respect for human dignity and the well-being of the planet serve the long-term interests of pension plan members. United Church policies direct that maximizing economic return on investments must give way to economic justice, human rights, and environmental protection<sup>(4)</sup>

Since 2008 the UCCPB's ethical investment advisor, Jantizi Research (now Sustainalytics) has recommended against inclusion of Goldcorp in the UCCPB portfolio, due to ongoing community conflict. (In a recent UCCPB communications to Maritime Conference Mining the Connections Working Group.)

Goldcorp continues to obtain exploration and exploitation licenses without the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous communities (required by the UN Declaration on Indigenous

Peoples, Article 26.)<sup>(5)</sup> It has obtained licenses in regions where indigenous communities have voted massively against mining projects in municipal referenda and where Catholic diocesan and parish environmental justice committees are courageously resisting the presence of mining projects.<sup>(6)</sup> In 2010, the Goldcorp-funded Human Rights Assessment recommended a moratorium on exploration, expansion and conversion of exploration to exploitation licenses, pending effective State involvement in consultation processes. Yet Goldcorp has extended the Marlin Mine underground and plans to develop the nearby Los Chocoyos open-pit mine.

The Cerro Blanco geo-thermal mine near the border with El Salvador threatens the eco-system providing water to 67% of Salvadorans. It was built despite water and soil scientists' warnings of a flawed environmental impact assessment. Goldcorp has suspended mine operations, citing gold prices. However, problems of extremely hot water and unstable soil containing a naturally high level of arsenic remain unresolved. The El Salvador Roundtable on Metallic Mining (UCC partner ADES is a lead member) and El Salvador's Ombudsperson seek the mine's permanent closure.<sup>(7)</sup>

The UCCPB contracts SHARE to engage with Goldcorp management. We question this involvement when our partners see no significant change after nearly a decade of management engagement. SHARE's management engagement takes place within a framework of ensuring the long-term value of the company, making it unlikely to take on issues that may reduce Goldcorp's financial value.<sup>(8)</sup>

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[1] United Church, KAIROS partners: Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala, Conference of Evangelical Churches of Guatemala, CEIBA (Association for Community Development and Promotion), ADES (Social and Economic Development Association of Santa Marta, El Salvador) , [www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/](http://www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/)

[2] *Where Our Treasure Is*, <http://marconf.ca/resources/treasure/> Messages from Bishop Ramazzini (Ecumenical Christian Council member) and Catholic parish leader, Sister Maudilia Lopez Cardona. p.9. Letter by a Canadian aboriginal woman, Cathy Gerroir, who has collaborated with the United Church in the Maritimes. p. 15

[3] National Institute of Forensic Sciences March, 2013 report on government ministries' surface and groundwater samplings near the Marlin mine. Commission on Peace and Ecology [www.ciel.org/Law\\_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd\\_water\\_report%20english.pdf](http://www.ciel.org/Law_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd_water_report%20english.pdf)

[4] Examples: The United Church social policy *One Earth Community – Ethical Principles for Environment and Development* (1992), the resource *Mission and Investing: A Guide for The United Church of Canada Congregations and Organizations* (2002), resources that followed from *Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire* (2006) See *Where Our Treasure Is*, p. 1

[5] [issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un\\_declaration\\_rights\\_indigenous\\_peoples](http://issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un_declaration_rights_indigenous_peoples)

[6] [www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/](http://www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/)

[7] [www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468](http://www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468) <http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.html>

[8] Shareholder Association for Research and Education [http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human\\_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf](http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf)

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

## **BC 9 UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA PENSION BOARD DIVESTMENT FROM GOLD CORP**

**Origin: Kootenay Presbytery**

**Financial Implications if known: unknown**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council respond to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social Policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitments to partnership and right relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, by instructing the General Secretary to communicate to The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.**

### **Background**

Because of your money, you are complicit. Give your money to something that gives life.  
~ Catholic Parish Committee in Defense of Mother Earth, San Miguel Ixtahuacan Nov. 2013 in meeting with the Mining the Connections/KAIROS Mining Delegation.

We bring this proposal forward as an urgent concern for immediate attention. United Church, KAIROS and Canadian aboriginal partners have urged the UCCPB to publicly divest from Goldcorp. (1, 2) We are acutely aware of the ongoing suffering of indigenous Mayan communities, related to negative environmental, social and health impacts. The presence of the Marlin Mine for a period of more than nine years in Guatemala has resulted in:

- serious environmental damage, especially water contamination. (3)
- disruption of community cohesion and an increase in community conflict.
- an increase in domestic violence and family breakdown.
- a huge increase in alcohol abuse and sex trade.
- a loss of Mam, the principal indigenous language.
- an increase in health issues including the spread of HIV/AIDS, skin lesions.
- malnutrition among children due to inflated prices for basic products.

The statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles for the Pension Plan of the United Church of Canada (2005) Article 33 states: Socially responsible investment procedures can be employed provided there is reasonable assurance that the best long term interest of the members is being served. The United Church has always affirmed that respect for human dignity and the well-being of the planet serve the long-term interests of pension plan members. United Church policies direct that maximizing economic return on investments must give way to economic justice, human rights, and environmental protection. (4)

Since 2008, the UCCPB's ethical investment advisor, Jantizi Research (now Sustainalytics) has recommended against inclusion of Goldcorp in the UCCPB portfolio, due to ongoing community conflict. (UCCPB communications to Maritime Conference Mining the Connections Working Group.)

Goldcorp continues to obtain exploration and exploitation licenses without the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous communities (required by the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, Article 26.) (5) It has obtained licenses in regions where indigenous communities have voted massively against mining projects in municipal referenda and where Catholic diocesan and parish environmental justice committees are courageously resisting the presence of mining project. (6) In 2010, the Goldcorp-funded Human Rights Assessment recommended a moratorium on exploration, expansion and conversion of exploration to exploitation licenses, pending effective State involvement in consultation processes. Yet Goldcorp has extended the Marlin Mine underground and plans to develop the nearby Los Chocoyos open-pit mine.

The Cerro Blanco geo-thermal mine near the border with El Salvador threatens the eco-system providing water to 67% of Salvadorans. It was built despite water and soil scientists' warnings of a flawed environmental impact assessment. Goldcorp has suspended mine operations, citing gold prices. However, problems of extremely hot water and unstable soil containing a naturally high level of arsenic remain unresolved. The El Salvador Roundtable on Metallic Mining (UCC partner ADES (Economic and Social Development Association) is a lead member) and El Salvador's Ombudsperson seek the mine's permanent closure. (7)

The UCCPB contracts SHARE to engage with Goldcorp management. We question this involvement when our partners see no significant change after nearly a decade of management engagement. SHARE's management engagement takes place within a framework of ensuring the long-term value of the company, making it unlikely to take on issues that may reduce Goldcorp's financial value. (8)

#### **Footnotes:**

1. United Church, KAIROS partners: Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala, Conference of Evangelical Churches of Guatemala, CEIBA (Association for Community Development and Promotion), ADES (Social and Economic Development Association of Santa Marta, El Salvador) , [www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/](http://www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/)
2. Where Our Treasure Is, <http://marconf.ca/resources/treasure/> Messages from Bishop Ramazzini (Ecumenical Christian Council member) and Catholic parish leader, Sister Maudilia Lopez Cardona. p.9. Letter by a Canadian aboriginal woman, Cathy Gerroir, who has collaborated with the United Church in the Maritimes. p. 15
3. National Institute of Forensic Sciences March, 2013 report on government ministries' surface and groundwater samplings near the Marlin mine. Commission on Peace and Ecology [www.ciel.org/Law\\_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd\\_water\\_report%20english.pdf](http://www.ciel.org/Law_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd_water_report%20english.pdf)
4. Examples: The United Church social policy One Earth Community –Ethical Principles for Environment and Development (1992), the resource Mission and Investing: A Guide for The United Church of Canada Congregations and Organizations (2002),resources that followed from Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire (2006) See Where Our Treasure Is, p. 15



5. [issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un\\_declaration\\_rights\\_indigenous\\_peoples](http://issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un_declaration_rights_indigenous_peoples)
6. [www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/](http://www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/)
7. [www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468](http://www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468) <http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.html>
8. Shareholder Association for Research and Education [http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human\\_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf](http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf)

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

## **M&O 21 CLIMATE CHANGE PROPOSAL FOR GENERAL COUNCIL 42**

**Origin:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** minimal

**Staffing Implications if known:** minimal

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council directs that the work on climate justice be a priority in our denomination and in our work with partners.**

### **Background:**

In August 2009, the 40<sup>th</sup> General Council adopted a Proposal from M&O Conference (M&O 1 of 2009) on Climate Change and Global Warming which established key policy positions and laid out a menu of actions for consideration by respective courts and bodies of The United Church of Canada.

In 2012, M& O Conference made a proposal (M&O 2 of 2012) to the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council entitled Noah or Belshazzar –The United Church of Canada and Global Warming: Dare We Risk a Challenge Deferred?

Appendix items 6 and 9 of the latter proposal stated in part: “call the Church as institution, its leaders, the General Council Executive, and the Church’s Courts, bodies and congregants, to assume their respective responsibilities to take more urgent and intentional action on the lines set out in M&O 1, and such other steps as would bring about a paradigm shift within the Church”... And “request the Executive of the General Council to develop an updated program of action on global warming and the crisis of creation, including the oceans, to be carried out by the Church during the triennium 2012-2015”...

Ottawa Presbytery has decided to take action as set out in its attached Motion adopted April 14, 2015. Whatever the outcome of The Comprehensive Review, the federal election of 2015 will be long over before its decisions are implemented and it is timely and compelling for Montreal and Ottawa Conference to express its concerns about climate change and to urge pressing action on Canada’s political leadership, as set out in the Ottawa Presbytery Motion. With regard to longer term action, there will undoubtedly be provision in the implementing legislation and regulations for appropriate United Church bodies to serve a “successor state” function for the duties and responsibilities of terminated or altered existing bodies.

### MOTION on Climate Change for the April 14, 2015 Meeting of Ottawa Presbytery

Moved by Norma McCord and seconded by Rev. Caroline Penhale:

That Ottawa Presbytery decide it is time to take up its responsibility in regard to tackling climate change; and initially, to take or actively encourage the steps below to reduce its carbon footprint and to advocate for a national climate change action plan:

1. Ottawa Presbytery commits itself to develop an action plan to assist its congregations in reducing their physical plants' carbon footprints by 25% over the next five years.

2. Climate Change Action Plan

A) We (Ottawa Presbytery) work on our own and with partners to encourage development of a national Climate Change Action Plan. Such a plan would include:

- acknowledgement of the reality of anthropogenic global warming; support for the 2 degree Celsius cap on global warming; and the consequential need for urgent action involving both mitigation and adaptation, including net real reduction of overall Canadian GHG emissions;
- measures that ensure a steadily rising price on greenhouse gas emissions throughout Canada, including increasingly strict GHG emissions standards across the board;
- an end to federal subsidies and special tax breaks to the Canadian fossil fuel industry;
- increased investments in cleaner, low-impact energy alternatives, including widespread adoption of LEED standards;
- spending on preserving water resources, actual and potential parkland and wildlife habitats;
- support for the climate change efforts of the most vulnerable, particularly those in the far North and the Global South; and,
- Active support by Canada of such a position internationally and bilaterally, including at the Paris meeting in December 2015 to finalise an international agreement on climate change.

B) We launch a multi-pronged campaign during this coming Federal Election, including creating a sample letter by the September Presbytery meeting. The goal is that over 50% of Presbyters and a large body of members/adherents communicate, in various ways, to their Member of Parliament and each candidate in their riding, their support for strong and early action on climate change along the above lines.

C) Ottawa Presbytery establish a task group responsible to Presbytery Executive in order to pursue and coordinate these actions, as well as to encourage further education and understanding regarding climate change, and to liaise and act with likeminded bodies and individuals.

**Carried**

**Intermediate Court Action:**

The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted in concurrence.

## **BC 5 CLIMATE JUSTICE DISCUSSION CIRCLES**

**Origin:** Kootenay Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Development of resources. Quite minimal as the model is already being used at Nelson and Castlegar United Churches

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council direct the General Secretary, General Council to create online and print resources for the creation of climate justice discussion circles, and further publicize and make these resources available to congregations and groups in Canada, based on models used within Kootenay Presbytery at Castlegar and Nelson United Churches.**

### **Background**

The Earth's climate is changing at an unprecedented rate and human activity is overwhelmingly responsible. Increased risk of droughts, floods, tropical storms, and altered weather patterns threatens to displace more people and lead to increasing numbers of civil wars and international conflict. People living in poverty and indigenous populations, including here in Canada, are made especially vulnerable to climate chaos. The people and countries responsible for the majority of historic heat-trapping pollution are least likely to bear the brunt of the changes. Conversely, the people and countries least responsible for causing climate chaos are most likely to experience disease, displacement, and conflict. Climate chaos is a justice issue with which every follower of Jesus and every person of faith should be concerned. Ocean acidification, also caused by carbon dioxide emissions, is another area of major concern.

There are many different ways to raise concerns about climate change and advocate for justice. There is direct action and civil disobedience, which is occurring around the globe. There is political advocacy, which many groups also employ. There is letter writing, blogging, film-making, and utilizing many media to get the message out. But, as Christian people, along with all of the above, we have always engaged one another person-to-person. People-to-people justice helped to end apartheid, is helping to build reconciliation between 1st Nations and non-1st Nations people, and is a key component to seeking peace for Palestinian people, just to name a few examples.

People who are leading the way in seeking climate justice both within and outside of the Church advocate having conversations, difficult conversations, about our changing climate and what we can do about it. As these conversations lead to other conversations, person to person, the ripples grow larger. Through these conversations the social construct of what is appropriate and inappropriate begins to change. And as the social construct changes, the political discussion changes, too. These ripples of conversation and change are one of the many tools available to communities in seeking climate justice.

The other aspect to the creation of discussion circles is that they take little facilitation and are leaderless, cooperative movements. Different organizations can partner together to host and create discussion circles, but the circles can then spread outward. So, this is an opportunity to both engage in conversations about change and partner with other groups in our communities.

The United Church has churches in many communities in Canada, buildings that are safe spaces for conversations. Churches can be places where many people come to meet to talk together about important things. The use of circles, a long used tradition in the Church, provides a safe place for people to share their concerns and deep feelings about climate change and seek to find ways to work together in advocating climate justice.

Castlegar and Nelson United Churches have developed a process and resources, which are not proprietary and are free to be emulated across the United Church and throughout our country, especially in a cooperative effort with other community groups.

The United Church of Canada has spoken prophetically and frequently about climate justice. This is one other way that we can facilitate discussion as one important tool to help create change in our Canadian political and social construct.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

## **BC 11 CLEAN WATER FOR ALL CANADIANS**

**Origin:** Vancouver South Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None for General Council, but considerable for the Canadian Government

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Vancouver South Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to ask publicly for commitment from the Federal Government that all Canadian communities, including First Nations Communities, have access to potable water by 2018.**

### **Background**

Many Canadian communities, especially Northern and First Nations communities do not have access to clean “potable” drinking water.

39% of First Nations Communities have water systems deemed “high risk” by Canadian Health Authorities. Approximately 20% of Reserve homes have no access to running water and therefore no access to adequate sewage systems.

The lack of clean water leads to many health problems, from minor rashes to dangerous gastrointestinal illness and other infections. It is considered a serious limitation on community health, economic well-being, educational preparedness and environmental degradation.

The United Church has a history of providing health care services in northern, rural and isolated communities and recognizes that poor water quality is a major barrier to raising health outcomes and life expectancy especially for First Nations people, to the level of the General Population.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

## **MNWO 6 TRANS CANADA PIPELINE ENERGY EAST PROJECT**

**Originating Body:** Cambrian Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) have the General Secretary, General Council\* write to the Federal Government expressing The United Church of Canada's opposition to The Trans Canada Pipeline Energy East project; and, we encourage each of our pastoral charges to launch a letter-writing campaign expressing their opposition to the Trans Canada Pipeline Energy East project to both their Provincial and the Federal Governments.**

### **Background**

The Energy East project will greatly increase the expansion of tar sands oil production and its associated significant on-site pollution issues.

This Energy East pipeline will stretch over 4,000 km of our valued Canadian landscape where leaks would be disastrous.

Diluted bitumen spills are impossible to clean up properly.

This project will contribute massive amounts of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere which will serve to accelerate many negative aspects of climate change.

We, as United Church members, strive to live with respect in creation and to seek justice.

The Energy East project promises very limited economic benefits for Canadians.

### **Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

\*The original proposal directed the Moderator to write and was changed to reflect our polity that the General Secretary, General Council or the Executive of the General Council receive directions from the General Council.

**M&O 20 THE BEACONSFIELD INITIATIVE, EXPLORING CANADIAN MINING PRACTICES AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES, STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND STUDYING THE IMPACT OF CANADIAN MINING INTERESTS IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES (PROPOSAL)**

**Originating Body:** Montreal Presbytery

**Funding Implications:** Existing Funding and Special Appeal

**Staffing Implications:** Existing

**Source of Funding:** General Council Partners in Mission Budget and Special Appeal

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council, in order to extend the work of the Beaconsfield Initiative to the Southern Philippines, direct the Executive of the General Council and General Secretary, General Council to:**

- 1. call for the following:**
  - a) the end of the vilification and human rights violations of people and people's organizations of the Southern Philippines;**
  - b) the end of illegal arrest and imprisonment of people;**
  - c) the end of abuse, violence, and sex crimes against women in indigenous communities as practiced by the military; and**
  - d) the protection of the land and resources from destructive large scale mining and all Canadian mining projects affecting communities; and**
  
- 2. take the following actions:**
  - a) encourage our church members to lobby the Canadian government to change the Mining Act in order to apply all our environmental, human rights and labour laws to the Canadian mining corporation operating outside of Canada;**
  - b) boycott and divest from any companies who use and employ private militias or security forces, trained and equipped by the Armed Forces of the Philippines;**
  - c) encourage Kairos and other church partners to do the same.**

**Background:**

The Beaconsfield Initiative was an exposure mission (2010) to the Cordillera Region in the Northern Philippines, with the purpose of establishing long term covenants with partners and church congregations in the Cordillera region and congregations and ministry sites in Canada. As well, to evaluate the impact of Canadian mining practices and interests in the Cordillera, specifically in Abra Province; to explore and document the effect on the lives of Indigenous people; the militarization of the region; the extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances; the resistance to mining explorations; the environmental destruction and human rights violations.



Our new endeavour is an exposure mission to the Southern Philippines (2015), where there are major established Canadian mining corporations, with the purpose of evaluating the impact of Canadian mining practices and interests in the Southern Philippines; to explore and document the effect on the lives of indigenous people; the militarization of the region; the extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances; the resistance to mining explorations; the environmental destruction and human rights violations; and to link with our Philippines partners. Secondly, we intend to share the information through church channels and also through a detailed media plan we will share the information in the Quebec milieu, with the participation of a journalist. We want to connect the information we collect with the mining issues in the Congo and Guatemala. We will also reconnect with our partners in the Cordillera at the end of our exposure in order to exchange information on human rights issues and mining operations.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Montreal & Ottawa Conference AGM 2012 passed two motions re the recommendations found in the said report, first, a motion to concur with the recommendations, with the addition of one sentence for clarity following the initial paragraph: “To continue the work of the Beaconsfield Initiative in the Cordillera region in the Philippines, we ask the 41st General Council to direct the General Council Executive and General Secretary to take appropriate action on the following.” GC-41 passed a unanimous motion to support the Initiative.

At its Annual General Meeting in May 2015, the Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference voted in concurrence.

## **TOR 13 RECYCLING NON-BIODEGRADABLE PLASTICS**

**Origin:** Stanley East

**Financial Implications if known:** Nil

**Staffing Implications if known:** Nil

**Source of Funding if known:** Nil

**Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

- 1. call on The United Church of Canada and all of its Conferences, presbyteries, local ministry units and members to follow the motion adopted by the 39<sup>th</sup> General Council in the year 2006 to avoid the use of bottled water in plastic single use containers where possible;**
- 2. write to the federal and provincial governments calling on them to:**
  - a. Encourage the development and use of compostable bio-plastics in Canada where suitable, particularly where single use plastic items are landfilled due to non-recyclability.**
  - b. Encourage the continued expansion of recycling of non-compostable bio plastics and plastics from fossil hydrocarbons on a national scale in all communities and rural areas.**
  - c. Encourage and where necessary legislate reduction in the use of excess plastic packaging**
  - d. Request government, industry and international participation in reducing and ultimately elimination of all plastics from entering our water streams and oceans through recycling, land and landfill management and international regulation against disposal of waste at sea.**
  - e. Request the elimination of and if necessary regulating the use of personal care products containing micro beads or similar items which would ultimately enter the water stream and oceans to be ingested by marine life**
- 3. Direct the Executive of the General Council, through the appropriate committee or action, to launch an awareness campaign to encourage members of The United Church of Canada to make choices that support reductions in the use of excess plastics and packaging and encourage recycling of plastics.**

### **Background:**

We are concerned about the amount of all plastics non-biodegradable and biodegradable in the ocean. These plastics may or may not be broken down by the sunlight into smaller pieces which are ingested by marine life threatening marine life and human consumption of marine life as a

food source as well as the eco-balance of marine species. Larger plastic items not broken down also threaten larger marine life.

Greenpeace International, one of many non-government organizations that campaigns for marine conservation and zero pollution, describes a trash vortex in the North Pacific that is the size of Texas, in which an estimated six kilos of plastic for every kilo of natural plankton, along with other slow degrading garbage. Some plastics in the gyre will not break down in the lifetimes of the grandchildren of the people who threw them away.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**MOTION by Stanley East/Janet Jones that Toronto Conference  
MOTION**

**CARRIED.**

### **ANW 3 SOCIAL JUSTICE CONVERSATION**

**Origin:** Red Deer Presbytery, April 23, 2015

**Financial Implications if known:** Much of this work could be done by the Unit within its existing budget, but there may be some expenses for resource sharing and consultation, to be determined by the committee in consultation with General Council Executive.

**Staffing Implications if known:** Significant staff resources would be required to support the appropriate Unit or Committee in designing a consultation process, developing tools for conversation, collating results and preparing a report with recommendations

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Red Deer Presbytery (of Alberta and Northwest Conference) proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to engage the whole church in a process of consultation, review and discernment about the social justice ministries and public witness of The United Church of Canada, including addressing questions such as the following: how the church most faithfully engages questions of social justice, its importance to our faithfulness, the dangers and possible failures in this ministry, and what criteria, guidelines and principles might help guide the church to do this ministry in ways that most effectively witness to God's kingdom (kin-dom) and build up the body of Christ.**

#### **Background:**

Work for social justice is often seen as one of the defining characteristics of The United Church of Canada. It is an important part of our ethos, and strongly grounded in the biblical witness, and our Reformed and Methodist heritage.

At the same time, decisions on social justice issues made at various Courts of the church often generate controversy, both within the wider community and within the church. Controversy is not always a bad thing, but people who fundamentally support the social justice ministry of the church often have legitimate questions about such decisions, how they are made, what the church is trying to do when it makes them, and whether there were different approaches that could have resulted in more faithful outcomes. So it is important that social justice work be done with care, and that the principles on which the church engages this work be clear, transparent, widely understood and carefully grounded in our theology and ethics.

This proposal is grounded in the conviction that it is important for the whole church to engage important issues of political, economic and environmental justice. This is true for many reasons, among which are the following:

- a. justice is the effort to embody love in social form; a concern for economic, political and environmental justice is one way in which we live out our call to love our neighbours;
- b. issues of justice affect the well-being of people and ecosystems in profound ways;
- c. economic, political and environmental issues have ethical and spiritual components which need to be raised to consciousness and discussed in public;

- d. the church is the guardian of ethical principles which need to be upheld in a public way;
- e. the church's role is to take on a prophetic role, opposing injustice and raising ethical and spiritual issues that would otherwise be overlooked;
- f. our political and economic systems often masquerade as "natural" and "inevitable" when they are in fact human institutions which can be shaped differently; and
- g. solidarity with Aboriginal peoples and other marginalized or oppressed groups is a natural reflection of our faith story of God's solidarity with such groups.

At the same time there are many failures which can lead the church to engage questions of social justice poorly, of which our involvement in residential schools is perhaps the most tragic example. Here are some failures that contribute to poor engagement:

- a. Failing to recognize that we do not start from a neutral position but from a social location that will influence our point of view;
- b. Failing to adequately distinguish between different levels of ethical decision making and to clearly name what level we intend to comment on:
  - i. basic theological and ethical principles,
  - ii. ideological convictions,
  - iii. issues of social analysis,
  - iv. "middle axioms" (broad policy objectives), and
  - v. detailed policy decisions which often involve complex issues of expert analysis;
- c. failing to fully consider the range of faithful perspectives on each of these levels
- d. making a decision based on incomplete and one-sided information, and failing to take into account the range of informed opinion on a particular issue;
- e. trying to take positions on too many issues with too little time, energy or resources to adequately engage them;
- f. failing to carefully consider the most appropriate action the church might take to address a question;
- g. failing to be clear about our role as a church;
- h. failing to take the time to build consensus on an issue within the wider church and not just within a meeting of a particular Court; and
- i. assuming that a resolution at a Conference or General Council is a sufficient response without follow-up with congregations and partners.

Some of these failures are fairly common and undermine the confidence and commitment of the church membership to the work of social justice. It may be helpful to develop some widely shared and commonly accepted guidelines that might help the church to engage important justice questions in a healthier way. Some possible examples of such guidelines:

- a. clearly articulating the theological and ethical principles which guide our engagement;
- b. carefully distinguishing between core theological and ethical convictions and matters on which Christians can legitimately disagree;
- c. crafting policy decisions in language that positively states what we are advocating for, and only rarely in negative language of opposition to specific policy directives;

- d. carefully considering diverse points of view and the ethical and ideological positions which underlie them;
- e. trying to build consensus wherever possible – the majority vote of a church Court often leaves a minority feeling unheard and unrepresented;
- f. inviting a broad constituency of the church to participate in decision-making whenever possible, especially individuals with expertise in issues under consideration;
- g. considering what level of the church is best equipped to address a particular issue and what kind of response would be most helpful;
- h. taking time to consider issues carefully, not being rushed to make a decision within the scope of a single meeting;
- i. being clear about our objectives on a particular issue (are we trying to provoke discussion, lift up overlooked issues, warn against danger, resist an evil, support a marginalized group, or something else?);
- j. choose carefully the issues we need to engage – because our energy, time and ability to carefully consider many issues is limited, and becoming more limited all the time, it may be better to focus on a few key issues over the long term than to spread ourselves too thin;
- k. doing the research to clearly name the issue and making sure we have a full understanding of the range of informed opinion, recognizing that even experts often disagree about relevant facts;
- l. participating critically in partnerships and broad social movements; and
- m. maintaining a focus on grace – taking a stance without being overzealous or judgmental towards those who see the issues differently – reminding ourselves that we are called to be participants in God’s Kingdom (Kin-dom), but it is not a human creation.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Red Deer Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference. Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.

## **BQ 2 NEW MISSION FOR THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

**Originating Body:** Bay of Quinte Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Approximately \$50,000

**Staffing Implications if known:** Support to Task Group

**Source of Funding if known:** Operating funds

**The Bay of Quinte Conference proposes that:**

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015) direct the Executive of General Council to:**

- 1. Establish a Task group for the specific purpose of developing a new mission statement for The United Church of Canada;**
- 2. Direct the Task Group to present the results of their work to the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council 2018.**

### **Background:**

The work of the Comprehensive Review Task Group has been driven primarily by financial considerations and the lack of volunteers to do the work of the church. Major structural changes are recommended to address these concerns.

However, in the church our work should be primarily driven by mission which will then provide the basis on which to make structural or organizational decisions. The principle is that form (structure) follows and is informed by mission (function). In “creating a new thing” (Revelation 21:5) it is our mission that will inform what we create.

Regardless of the outcome of the Comprehensive Review Task Group in terms of structural changes, Bay of Quinte Conference is convinced that development of a mission for The United Church of Canada is essential for the future health of the church.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Bay of Quinte Conference carried this proposal

## **ANW 6 THE RURAL MINISTRY OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

**Origin: St. Paul Presbytery**

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes:**

**That the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council (2015):**

- 1. affirm the importance of the rural ministry of The United Church of Canada; and**
- 2. direct the Executive of the General Council to appoint a Task Group to consider and make recommendations about the future mission and ministry of the rural ministry of the church.**

### **Background:**

Until now the majority of the membership of the United Church has existed in the context of the smaller and often times, rural churches. Many of these congregations continue to survive financially through the ongoing fund raising activities of the members. Many of these congregations are barely getting by at the current levels of assessment and the ability to expand capacity is minimal.

The possibility exists that the rural churches will be negatively impacted by the proposed changes being considered. However, the Presbytery wishes that it be reaffirmed that the church has a necessary mission to the rural context of Canada.

While it has been envisioned that some of the small rural churches may cease to exist in the next few years the belief that their value for the nurturing of members and for the mission of the church overall cannot be overlooked. Any attempt to force the closure of these churches or to write them off as dying communities should be strenuously resisted.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Council.



## **LON 17 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” SECURE FUNDING FOR UNITED CHURCH CAMPING**

**Origin:** Lambton Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** That a designated amount of money be directed annually either through the Mission and Service Fund or through the Denominational or Regional Council Funds to secure the future of United Church camping

**Staffing Implications if known:** That there be staff at the Regional Council levels who have within their staff portfolio responsibilities for promotion and support of United Church Camps within their Region

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission and Service Funds and Assessments

**Lambton Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) build into its restructuring recommendations staff time and funding for United Church Camping ministry. We recommend that Camping be named as a mission and ministry priority under the new restructuring and that a concrete plan for how to fund and resource camps across the country be developed.**

### **Background:**

United Church camping is the most impactful ministry that we do with children and young adults in The United Church of Canada. Every summer thousands of children across our country are introduced to God and nature through United Church Camping. Camping serves both an outreach and an educational ministry purpose for children and youth both within and beyond our church doors. The relationship between The United Church of Canada and its commitment to children’s programming through camping dates back to the time of Union. Over the years many generous individuals and congregations have donated beautiful land and their time and talents to assure that this ministry continues. It is our belief that the new structure needs to uphold the importance of this vital ministry by securing its future with funding and staff resources.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

