

# Theme: REMIT IMPLEMENTATION

## GENERAL COMMENTS

### What We Heard:



- One group had a lengthy discussion on the complications and importance and challenges of the networks and clusters part of the new structure.

## **ANW 08 – PRIORITIZING CLUSTERS AND NETWORKS**

### **What We Heard:**

- Appreciation for the lifting-up of this work.
- Groups supported parts of the proposal but not all parts.
- Groups supported the idea of intentional promotion of networks and clusters; may be challenging to expect them to self-initiate.
- One group noted in their region, recent initiatives have required staff and budget in order to get established; if this is essential the church must have a plan to resource it (i.e. staff and/or money). Other groups echoed concerns about resourcing.
- One group noted there is a distinction between a) establishing a network with financial support, and b) the

financial support for the program that a network may deliver.

- How can General Council provide a strategy without becoming directive? There is a need for the church to support the development of clusters and networks without forcing or imposing on communities of faith.
- The purpose of clusters and networks are different. Especially networks may not be the ministry of one region alone.
- One group questioned if it was possible for clusters or networks to be ecumenical beyond communities of faith.
- One comment noted concern in the ANCC about how big things are in the new structure – if things are to be organic, what happens if the invitation doesn't come?

- There was recognition that this will take concerted effort from everyone to make clusters and networks work.
- Some groups expressed concern that it may be too early for this proposal, rather should wait to see what develops organically.

### **Suggested Way Forward:**

That the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council:

- 1) affirm that clusters and networks will be central to living out our faith in the Three-Council Model, and essential to a healthy transition to the Three-Council Model; and
- 2) refer proposal ANW 08 – Prioritizing Clusters and Networks to the General Secretary.

Moved: M. Speer

Seconded: C. Vermeer-Korittko  
CARRIED.

## **BQ 1 – MAINTAINING THE NAME GENERAL COUNCIL**

### **HAM 1 – MAINTAINING THE TERM “GENERAL COUNCIL”**

#### **What We Heard:**

- Many groups dealt with both proposals together, so the facilitation team did as well.
- About 2/3 of the groups supported the proposals.
- In part, support for the proposals was because the name General Council translates better into French.
- Some folks felt that it was important to have a new name for a new structure while others wanted to honour our history by keeping the name General Council.
- Ecumenical partners know the name as General Council.
- Keeping the name General Council is one less change to adjust to; Denominational Council can be difficult to pronounce.

- One group commented it is not worth a remit if one is needed to revert to the name General Council.

### **Suggested Way Forward:**

That “denominational council” be understood to be the legal description of the decision making body of The United Church of Canada which will continue to be referred to as the “General Council” and;

that the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council take no further action on proposals BQ 1 / HAM 1.

Moved: L. Doyle

Seconded: B. Sheaves

CARRIED.

# **GCE 8 - REMIT RELATED REVISIONS TO THE BASIS OF UNION**

## **What We Heard:**

- Groups expressed general affirmation for the proposal; it enables the work of transitioning to the 3-court model. However, there were several general concerns raised by the groups:
  - One group was concerned about the removal of reference to the sick and elderly as a mission of the church.
  - Many groups commented that the exact changes should have been provided in parallel to facilitate clear understanding of what was changed.
  - One group questioned: What are the ambiguities that require discernment?

- There was a request for a clear definition about how lay people are elected or appointed to the Regional Council.
- There was a significant concern over the lack of clarity surrounding changes relating to definitions of pastoral charge, congregation and communities of faith, and their relationships to each other and to the Regions.
- One group asked: What is the central unit of the Church? Pastoral charge or community of faith?
- In addition to the general comments above, there were the following specific concerns:

Including the word “Christ” following Jesus in sections **5.3.1(3)**, **6.3.4(1)**, and **7.3.1.(1)**.

Revise “Calls & Appointments/Covenants” to read “Calls, Appointments & Covenants” in sections **5.3.4(1)** and **6.3.7**.

Include: “No candidate shall be received by the Office of Vocation unless recommended by a Community of Faith” as Section **13.2** and renumber accordingly.

**5.3.3 (5)** - it was suggested to add “The care of the poor and the visiting of the sick.” (see general comment above)

**4.1** The members of pastoral charges and congregations shall continue to be members of the United Church. - Should this refer to communities of faith?

**5.7 Church Membership** – does this section need to be revisited based on the potential change to the meaning of membership in the proposal from the Theology committee?

**10.0** The Order of Ministry shall be open to both men and women. Should this not be revised to say all individuals like other sections that had gendered references removed?

**11.7.2** It was suggested to replace “offer of employment” with “other form of covenant.”

### **Suggested Way Forward:**

That the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council:

1. Refer the proposal to the Executive, General Council

2. Refer the GC 43 Discussion Group notes on proposal GCE 08 to the General Secretary for review and to facilitate further edits; and,
3. Delegate the authority to the Executive, General Council to finalize the required edits to the Basis of Union.

Moved: F. Braman

Seconded: B. Paterson

**CARRIED.**

## **GCE 19 - ASSESSMENT RATE (2019-2021)**

### **What We Heard:**

All groups agreed with the proposal, with the following comments:

- This proposal is speaking to that which is in the remit background material for Funding a new model.
- A group said they were not debating the rate but how it's implemented; staff resources were intended to be closer to pastoral charges – it seems now that the opposite is happening.
- One group wanted to see a change to 10% increase each of the next three years for all pastoral charges.
- This proposal clarifies what the assessment rate is based on and what the cap process looks like going forward.

- GC 42 thought the split would be 60/40, and now it is 50/50. When, how, and why was this changed?
- One group felt it was necessary to trust the process.
- A few groups asked: Who decides if there is an unusual event or transaction?
- Several groups mentioned they wanted clarity about who gets assessed. What about a new community of faith like a house church? Will they eventually be assessed? If they don't have a charitable number can they be assessed?
- It was suggested that we need to educate the church on how the use of Mission & Service funds has changed and how the assessments are helping us to respond to the changing funding of all our work.

## **Suggested Way Forward:**

That the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council affirm proposal GCE 19 – Assessment Rate (2019-2021) and direct the General Secretary to implement.

Moved: B. Cornelius

Seconded: S. Brodrick

**CARRIED.**

## **MAR 03 – ACTION ON THE FORMATION OF AN ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS WITHIN THE NEW THREE COUNCIL MODEL**

### **What We Heard:**

There was some support for this proposal, but many groups had mixed feelings about it, and one group did not affirm it:

- All groups felt support for ministry personnel is important and should continue to be a priority.
- One group was more specific in suggesting clarification on how ministry personnel will be supported should happen before the end of presbyteries.
- A group reflected a concern that ministry personnel are unsure of where their support comes from if a conflict arises with a Community of Faith in the new structure; another group appreciated the language of “reaffirm the

importance of” the support for ministry personnel without strict timelines.

- Some wanted denominational support for such an association, others thought there should be an organic development.
- It was noted by one group that the DUCC (Diakonia in the United Church of Canada) is an association.
- There were questions about whether or not this would be similar to a union and concerns about moving towards unionization.
- One group suggested learning from other groups (e.g. Canadian Armed Forces).
- One suggestion that came from a group: delay three years and see if advocacy develops organically or with the Office

of Vocation rather than setting up a separate support system now.

- One group felt it was not up to the employer to form an association and recommended taking no action.
- One group reiterated that the proposal reminds General Council that there is a task group already working on this as assigned by General Council 42, and that the task group is supposed to report to the General Council Executive.

### **Suggested Way Forward:**

That the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council refer proposal MAR 03 to General Council Executive for information and that the work of the current task group on the Association of Ministers be made a priority.

Moved: R. Bartlett

Seconded: J. Webber-Cook

**CARRIED.**

Amendment:

Moved: D. MacDonald

Seconded: P. Nelson

**CARRIED.**