

Decision Making as The United Church Changes

The United Church of Canada is making decisions on five issues that require approval of pastoral charges. They would change the structure or the identity of the denomination, and therefore a majority of pastoral charges and Presbyteries must agree. Our Board will be meeting to examine four of them on **Saturday morning October 29**. You are very welcome to attend and participate in the discussion. The Board has denominational authority to vote, and after consideration will take the vote at the November 8 meeting.

This form of decision making is called remits. You may recall the remit on Statements of Faith a few years ago.

Catherine, Denise, and members of the Board will be happy to discuss your questions. Additional information, and study material, is available online: gc42.ca/remits

The four remits are:

1) **Three Council Model:**

Changing our governance from four to three decision-making structures.

Currently we have four courts: pastoral charges, presbyteries, Conferences, and General Council. It is proposed that the church have three councils, or levels, with specific ministries and responsibilities. The proposal does not simply remove one of the existing courts, but replaces both of the current middle courts with a new regional council. ...2

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2) **Elimination of Transfer and Settlement:**

“Transfer” is the process of moving ordained and diaconal ministers from one Conference to another for the purpose of settlement, or call and settlement. “Settlement” is the process of matching ordained and diaconal ministers with churches that request settlement. These processes were required until recently, and are currently optional for ordained and diaconal candidates for ministry. Settlement also means ratifying calls made by pastoral charges and presbyteries.

3) **Office of Vocation:**

This remit would create a new permanent Office of Vocation, for ministers to serve the United Church, as part of the General Council structure.

4) **A new funding model for the United Church:**

It is proposed that governance and associated support services at all levels of the church, beyond the local pastoral charges, would be funded through congregational assessments. Currently Presbyteries and Conferences can assess pastoral charges to cover regional expenses. The General Council does not have the power to assess; its costs are covered by Mission & Service, investment revenues from funds held in reserve, and donations. M&S will be part of this conversation.

We will discuss the fifth remit in 2017. It is called **One Order of Ministry**.