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Final Report from the Boundaries Commission

February 27, 2018

Dear Friends in Christ within The United Church of Canada,

Remit One calling for a Three Council Model for The United Church of Canada received the support of a large majority of pastoral charges, presbyteries, districts, synod, and consistoires.

A Boundaries Commission was established by a recalled meeting of the 42nd General Council on September 30, 2017. GC42 approved a mandate, the membership, and the timeline for the Commission to determine the number of regional councils and their boundaries.

The United Church of Canada acknowledges that its buildings and ministries, from coast to coast to coast, are on traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples. One significant early decision of the Commission was to honour a request from the Caretakers of Our Indigenous Circle. They had prepared the “Calls to the Church” document regarding the future place of the Indigenous Church within The United Church of Canada; see pages 56–67 of the complete [GCE Workbook November 18-20 2017](#). Consistent with these Calls, the Caretakers asked the Commission to honour the intent of the Indigenous Church to engage in a distinct process to decide their relationships within the new church structure.

After reviewing all requests for change and comments received in relation to the Commission’s interim report, the Commission met on February 9 and made its final decisions.

The chart below illustrates the decision of the Commission and describes 16 regional councils, but it does not reflect any decisions by the Indigenous Church as yet. The new relationships for Indigenous communities of faith will be decided at a later time by the Indigenous Church.

The regional councils are simply numbered at this time. We anticipate that there will be a subsequent process for naming these councils. The chart below provides a detailed written description of each regional council, which should allow all communities of faith to understand where they fit into the regional councils.

The attached map provides a high-level picture of where the regional councils will be located.



Regional Council (going west to east)	Description of Existing Pastoral Charges within the Boundary of Each Regional Council	Approximate Number of Pastoral Charges
1	All pastoral charges in BC Conference; Whitehorse PC, Yukon Territory; Banff: Rundle Memorial PC, Alberta.	174
2	All pastoral charges in the province of Alberta north of and including provincial Hwy 13; Yellowknife PC and Grace PC-Hay River, Northwest Territories; Fort Nelson: Hillcrest PC, Hudson's Hope: St. Peter's (SM) PC, Chetwynd Shared Ministry (SM) PC, South Peace PC, Fort St. John: St. Luke's PC, British Columbia.	95
3	All pastoral charges in the province of Alberta south of provincial Hwy 13, save Banff: Rundle Memorial PC, Alberta.	91
4	All pastoral charges in the province of Saskatchewan.	172
5	All pastoral charges in the province of Manitoba; All pastoral charges in the Central Time Zone portion of Cambrian Presbytery; Atikokan PC.	144

6	All pastoral charges in Manitou Conference; All pastoral charges in Algoma Presbytery; All pastoral charges in the Eastern Time Zone portion of Cambrian Presbytery, save Atikokan PC.	78
7	All pastoral charges in Elgin Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Essex Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Kent Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Lambton Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Middlesex Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Oxford Presbytery.	141
8	All pastoral charges in Huron-Perth Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Bruce Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Waterloo Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Northern Waters Presbytery north of Hwy 9, save Bond Head-Newton Robinson PC, Beeton: Trinity PC, Country Side PC, Midland: St. Paul's PC, but including Erin PC and Ballinafad PC.	138
9	All pastoral charges in Erie Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Halton Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Hamilton Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Niagara Presbytery; Norval PC, St. John's PC (Georgetown), St. Andrew's Georgetown PC, Acton PC.	143
10	All pastoral charges in Living Waters Presbytery, save Uxbridge: Trinity PC, Sandford-Zephyr PC, and Goodwood-Epson-Utica PC; All pastoral charges in Toronto Southeast Presbytery; All pastoral charges in South West Presbytery, save Norval PC, St. John's PC (Georgetown), St. Andrew's Georgetown PC; All pastoral charges in Northern Waters Presbytery south of Hwy 9, save Erin PC, Ballinafad PC, and Acton PC, but including Bond Head-Newton Robinson PC, Beeton: Trinity PC, Country Side PC, Midland: St. Paul's PC.	160
11	All pastoral charges in Lakeridge Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Kawartha Highlands Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Hills and Shores Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Shining Waters Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Kente Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Four Winds Presbytery;	146

	Trinity PC-Uxbridge, Sandford-Zephyr PC, and Goodwood-Epson-Utica PC, Living Waters Presbytery.	
12	All pastoral charges in Upper Valley Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Four Rivers Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Ottawa Presbytery; All pastoral charges in Seaway Valley Presbytery; Église Saint-Marc, Consistoire Laurentien	133
13	All pastoral charges in Consistoire Laurentien, save l'Église Saint-Marc; All pastoral charges in Consistoire du Québec.	76
14	All pastoral charges in the province of New Brunswick; All pastoral charges in the province of Prince Edward Island; Gaspé-Cap-Aux-Os PC, New Carlisle PC, and New Richmond PC, Quebec.	116
15	All pastoral charges in the province of Nova Scotia; Bermuda Synod has functioned as part of Maritime Conference pursuant to an agreement between the Synod and The United Church of Canada. This report confirms that the Synod will function as part of Regional Council 15 within the meaning of the agreement.	139
16	All pastoral charges in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.	88

Process

With a strong commitment to grounding our work in scripture and theological reflection, the Commission members frequently turned to numerous biblical passages to inform their prayer and thought.

The Commission asked the 85 presbyteries, districts, synod, and consistoires and 13 Conferences to give them their best wisdom about the criteria that should shape the Commission's decision related to regional councils. In addition, the Commission offered to send a member to attend a meeting of Conference Executives and engage them further on what has been emerging from their many consultations and conversations over the last six years that began with the Comprehensive Review process. These meetings with all 13 Conferences occurred in October and November 2017.

The Commission also received input from congregations, individuals, and representatives of other church bodies, including the two Tables de concertation des ministères en français—national and regional, the president of the National United Church Women, camps, and outreach ministries. The Commission is deeply thankful for the insight, words of support, and prayerful blessings that were received. The Commission also appreciates the extensive support from staff.

Criteria used: In December 2017, the Commission met and finalized the criteria that informed its interim decision:

Geography: intuitive logical sense of the regional boundary; travel patterns; population size, density, and similarity; political/provincial boundaries

Relationships: connections among the communities of faith; continuity of relationships; access to resources

Capacity: financial and human resources; ability to do the work and make effective decisions; efficiency; technology

Culture: language; theology; historical relationships; urban/rural

The interim report of the Commission was distributed on January 10, and comments and requests for change were invited until January 31. The Commission wants to thank all who wrote to us, either requesting a change or offering their comments on what had been proposed. Some also took this opportunity to reflect more broadly on the state of our church in this time of change. Some expressed sharp disagreements with a part of our initial work; others offered affirmation and appreciation.

The Commission members carefully read, and reread, each piece of correspondence, and then shared the work of distilling and noting all of the shared ideas before reconsidering its earlier work and making this final decision. Of all requests for a change to our interim report, 52.5% related to the proposed regional councils 1 and 2, 13.5% related to council 11, and 9% applied to councils 6 and 7. The remaining requests (25%) related to diverse matters.

As we noted when we presented our earlier report, we offer this work to the church in the belief that God is calling us into a new and renewed church to live out God's mission in the world.

Grace and peace,



Andrew Richardson, Chair

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