

Remit Implementation and the Indigenous Church

May 2018

Work has begun to help the church move smoothly through the stages of the remit implementation process. The remits will go to the General Council meeting in July 2018 for discussion and, if approved, for implementation. This newsletter details the process of remit implementation as it affects the Indigenous church. For up-to-date information on remit implementation in general, visit www.united-church.ca/leadership/church-administration/remit-implementation.

Timeline for the Indigenous Church

June 2018

- **Nomination from Aboriginal Ministries Council for the Denominational Council Executive.** Indigenous communities of faith in All Native Circle Conference to submit names by May 22, 2018, to All Native Circle Conference for the Denominational Council Executive.
- **Regional staff to be appointed**, with the provision that the 43rd General Council approves Remit 1, Three Council Model.
- Office of Vocation ministers to be provisionally appointed. This will include a .5 full-time equivalent **Indigenous Office of Vocation Minister**.
- Begin the Indigenous cluster group process with communities of faith to **discern regional belonging** (Call to the Church #6).

July 2018

July 21–27 **43rd General Council**, Oshawa, Ontario

August 2018

Aug. 15 **Nomination from Aboriginal Ministries Council for Board of Vocation.**

Aug. 31 **Deadline to submit Mission & Service grant applications** from Indigenous communities of faith in British Columbia Conference, Hamilton Conference, Toronto Conference, Bay of Quinte Conference, Montreal and Ottawa Conference, and London Conference. (*All Native Circle Conference's Council on Sharing met to review Mission & Service grant applications from All Native Circle Conference April 26–27, 2018.*)

September 2018

Sept. 13–16 **Aboriginal Ministries Council meets** in Toronto.

Sept. 30 Executive of General Council meets and appoints Board of Vocation.

Nominations from Aboriginal Ministries Council for Indigenous Candidacy Assessment Board (Council on Learning)

More cluster group processes with Indigenous Communities of Faith to **continue discerning regional belonging**.

October 2018

Oct. 15 Target date for Indigenous communities of faith to **choose their regions**.

August 2019

- **National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering**
- Creation of **National Indigenous Elders' Council** and new **National Indigenous Organization** at the Gathering, with founding meetings of these bodies to follow.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Belonging

a. Does my community of faith need to belong to a region? Why?

Yes. Regions and Indigenous communities of faith will seek covenantal relationship. The covenant will outline mutual responsibilities for its life and mission. For example, communities of faith will need support from regions when seeking and appointing new ministers. The new National Indigenous Organization will partner with regions to offer staff support that is culturally sensitive and contextual to Indigenous communities of faith.

b. What support will my community of faith have to enter into a covenant with the new region we choose?

Draft templates of covenants will be available in the fall of 2018. Community Capacity Development Coordinators will be available to help.

c. Can my community of faith choose the region to which we will belong? What if we change our minds?

Yes, the choice is entirely yours! If your community finds that the chosen region isn't a good fit, your community and the region will be supported through a process of discernment to determine a way to meet the needs of your community of faith. After going through this process, it is possible that a community of faith may choose to covenant with another region.

Communities of Faith are invited to consider the following principles as they choose their region. These principles may also be used when communities of faith develop covenants with their chosen regions to describe their new relationships.

- Vision of Ministry
- Culture
- Language
- Resources
- Relationships
- Geography
- History

2. Office of Vocation

a. What is the Indigenous church's relationship with the proposed Office of Vocation?

Call to the Church #1 asks for the establishment of an Indigenous office or department within the Office of Vocation so that ministry personnel in Indigenous communities of faith have services provided by people who are knowledgeable of Indigenous ways of being and working. Work is now underway to implement this Call in ways that ensure that Indigenous people will guide decisions concerning the accompaniment, oversight, and supervised ministry placements of Indigenous students who are candidates for ministry.

Calls to the Church

To read the Calls to the Church, search "calls to the church" on www.united-church.ca, visit www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/all-my-relations, or contact us for a copy (see page 4).

3. Caucus Groups

a. What's happening to the information gathered at the six caucus groups held from January to March 2018?

Representatives of Indigenous communities of faith provided advice to United Church Indigenous leaders and staff about the implementation of the Calls to the Church at the six caucus groups. The advice they provided helped the Aboriginal Ministries Council develop a proposal to the 43rd General Council about the establishment of the new national Elders' Council, the national Indigenous organization, and the subject of dual belonging (that is, the relationship between Indigenous communities of faith and the new regions). Information gathered in the caucus group process is also being used to develop the Indigenous components of the Office of Vocation.

We will continue to receive your questions, comments, and concerns, so please keep them coming (see page 4). They continue to shape the development and implementation of the Calls to the Church.

b. Will there be any follow-up from the caucus groups?

Yes! Follow-up gatherings will be held in June and in the fall of 2018, both face-to-face and through technology.

4. What type of support will communities of faith have? What can be expected?

Staff (i.e., capacity builders) will be deployed across the country. Further, the covenanting process, which will occur between communities of faith and the regions, will give opportunity to build relationships where the roles and responsibilities are clear.

5. How stable is the Indigenous funding?

One of the goals of the restructuring is to gain capacity to focus more of the church's resources on mission and ministry. As the church continues to manage anticipated reductions in Mission & Service, the Indigenous church will need to identify cost savings going forward.

6. What is the process for the 2019 Mission Support Grants?

All Native Circle Conference's Council on Sharing reviewed applications for its Communities of Faith in April 2018. Indigenous communities in British Columbia Conference, Hamilton Conference, Toronto Conference, Bay of Quinte Conference, Montreal and Ottawa Conference, and London Conference will send their applications to Stephanie Strachan at the General Council Office by August 31, 2018. The Aboriginal Ministries Council will review and make decisions on these Mission Support Grants in September 2018.

7. Who sets directions and goals for the Indigenous church?

The Calls to the Church, which has been reviewed and affirmed by the Indigenous peoples of The United Church of Canada, sets the framework for the Indigenous church's ongoing development. In the current structure, the Aboriginal Ministries Council discerns strategies and priorities within this framework. In partnership with the Aboriginal Ministries Council, the Executive of General Council directs the General Secretary to implement the work plans. If the 43rd General Council approves the proposed remits and the Calls to the Church, this work will become the responsibility of the new National Indigenous Organization.

8. When do the Calls to the Church become effective?

January 1, 2019, subject to approval by the 43rd General Council.

9. What do I do if I have a question that needs to be addressed now?

Read the Calls to the Church, and if you still have questions, contact your Community Capacity Development Coordinator or Lori Ransom, Project Manager, Calls to the Church / Remit Implementation.





Contact Information

Calls to the Church / Remit Implementation Hotline: 1-800-268-3781 ext. 2750

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Calls to the Church says:

We, the Indigenous ministries and communities of faith of The United Church, declare that we will tell our own story of what ministry means for us. We will decide for ourselves who we are, who constitutes our ministries groups and practices.

Together, we will gather under one tent and write a new verse.

