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## **1) Summary**

### **a) BQ 1: Maintaining the Name "General Council"**

Most of the comments were in support of the proposal, with a few wanting something different to signify change.

### **b) BQ 2: Steps Toward Reconciliation**

There is a desire for more clarity on some terms, such as "indigenize". General support for funding this work and continuing this work as it has been. Some question of how this fits with the *Calls to the Church* from the Caretakers.

### **c) BQ 3: Equity Monitor**

The story of lowering the person through the roof so they could see Jesus summarizes the issue being addressed. There is a desire to broaden equity and make it more inclusive. Other possible actions include: establish a national equity monitor who could resource this work, provide bodies with handbooks on how to do this, and ask specific communities how they would like to be included.

### **d) BQ 4: Descriptive Video**

It is a very focused request. Some technology, like DVD, is already becoming obsolete.

### **e) BQ 6: Alternative Relationships and Governance Structures**

This proposal raises many questions. Why are these groups not formed into pastoral charges? How can there be oversight so clergy are not overtaxed attending many meetings? Do we need flexibility before it is codified in *The Manual*? Is this a matter of workplace justice?

**f) BQ 7: Fairness in the new Funding Assessment model for Communities Of Faith who have raised funds for significant capital investments**

Some see this as an important issue. Others believe it was addressed through one of the presentations during the remit information sessions. There is a note that in multi-point pastoral charges, fundraising in one affects the assessment of all.

**g) BQ 8: Updating Our Theological Language**

Overall, this proposal has a lack of support. Some thought it might open us up to new faith conversations.

**h) BQ 9A/B: Proposal For Bay Of Quinte Conference (A) and General Council (B) To Work With UNESCO's Canadian Coalition Of Municipalities Against Racism And Discrimination**

There is a need for clarity. Churches are not joining, but encouraging the local municipality to join this network of Canadian municipalities. This is calling us to advocate for joining.

**i) BQ 10: Not limiting grant applications to one per Pastoral Charge when there exists single-point and multiple-point Pastoral Charges**

Many thought this proposal was absolutely necessary in order to be fair for multi-point pastoral charges. Some thought that we need better communication of opportunities. Some thought as long as are assessed in the new way.

**2) Detailed Commentary**

**j) BQ 1: Maintaining the Name "General Council"**

- Congregations don't care, but continual name change is confusing.
- Boarder issue – about change for the sake of change

- Identity
- Understanding who we are
- Too much change at once.
- Throwing new words at pastoral charges/congregations so maybe some consistency of language.
- "make all things new".
- Think of the money we waste getting new letterhead.
- Those beyond the church don't understand "General Council", and some within don't understand either.
- General Council was the face in the UC around the world. So to change means change more relationships than just internally.
- General Council is the one last thing to hold onto and make excuses about.
- General Council has values as a historic relationship/reformed tradition.
- Denominational council was initially lower case.
- Perhaps we need to discern a new name that addresses the issue of moving forward with balancing the past.
- A more dynamic name with umph!
- We like grand Pubah-Dom!
- Found language of "General Council" not appealing.
- Good suggestion "denominational"
- What's going to be recognizable.
- Should be "national Council".
- What about United Church Council?
- Something new is being created,? To make it easier
- Is the function radically different? Helping in congregations to understand.
- "Church House" no General council, both that does the national work.
- Helps people that we understand national group.
- Would the word team help, that we are part of the group?
- Revise to say, we encourage GC considers number of options to clarify.
- All will come to "sage minds" to decide.

## **k) BQ 2: Steps Toward Reconciliation**

- Wanting to maintain work that has already been done.
- Want to recognize the Living in Right Relations
- How does this Conference participate in the Living in Right Relations Network?
  - Trying to establish it...helped us right across the country.
- Need to be staff time and money to keep network going...
- Clarity at indigenize and decolonize...what does that
- No brainier
- If we're serious about active reconciliation, I think we have to continue what we started.
- Networks are self-funding – where does this come from? Assessment, M&S, Other?
- This better not be forgotten.
- There need to be strong language about need and intent.
- We must respond explicitly: clear and intentional.
- It is a church issue, not just a local or individual issue.
- They need to come up with some way to earmark a portion of the larger assessment budget towards this initiative.
- The funding piece cannot change.
- If your telling us (congregations) to live into right relationship, you've got to help us and show us a bit of a return, financially and otherwise, to make it happen.
- Don't Just put it in General operations.
- Do we keep Dancing the Circle LIRR network formal?  
Answer: Yes!
- Would suggest a preamble that preconized the need to continue what is underway to work either our own church groups – that highlight and articulate this point more explicitly – e.g. add to p. 7 # 3 and par 2) a further point "in dialogue with the indigenous circles within our church."
- On p. 7, subsection 3, part 2) what is the meaning of "indigenize" in this context. It might be useful to have an explanation of term inserted. E.g. reference to "caretakers our indigenous circle: call to the church".

### **I) BQ 3: Equity Monitor**

- Make sure everyone with "special needs" is included in some way.
- Accessibility – makes sure there are accessibility and all others equity issues.
- Behavioural code should be included
- Going beyond the assumption of equity to actual equity.
- Make sure one person is keeping an eye on it so as not to miss anything.
- Only Conference that has take a lead on this – flogged for GC 43 planning.
- Who can we got to at national level about this.
- Added dietary equity because there is some confusion about some dietary needs.
- Define the various equity needs
- Things are often off our radar.
- Jesus about accessibility. Follow that example
  - Lower person through the roof to have Jesus helps them.
  - Clarity in how to reach out. Intentionality to look at things we have not considered.
- Churches are looking for how to handle this.
- "Jesus says don't send children away but to me."
- Need focus on accessibility too so that we don't want to be excluded.
- Create equity for those further back.
- Self-identify if there is a problem
- Height equity – design of worship spaces.
- Deaf community resource point out that the community needs to determine its own needs. Ask permission to assist.
- This proposal is more a national model.
- Accessibility Act in Ontario is quite extensive.
- By having a specific monitor in future gives a got to person to help meet the needs in congregation.
- This is too narrow as presented.
- We need to continue to widen that circle of inclusion and be explicit about it.

## Revisions/Additions

- Establish an equity monitor at national level so we can contact that person.
- Community partners
- Handbook that has resource and contact.
- Checklist (use cartoons) for all issues and resources and provincially or regionally.
- Congregations overwhelmed by the information, for instance what does scent free mean?
- Keeping the information simple.
- Wilson the dog

### **m) BQ 4: Descriptive Video**

- Micro piece of inclusion – video that leave out a group of people.
- Descriptive video not just closed captioning.
- Lobby social media platforms who no longer allow descriptive video to be inclusive.
- Issue – some churches have no technological equipment – can't afford People don't have computers.
- Technology is an added touch on DVD. Don't need anything more than a DVD player and TV.
- Lobby government about having high speed internet, etc. in all areas of the province.
- Still need tangible resources.
- Identify the gaps in access to social media.
- Technological transitions phase-outs of even DVD drives on computers.
- What is stopping us from having universal coverage? Who controls access and money?

### **n) BQ 5: Integrated Accessibility/Equitable Standards**

- No comments received.

### **o) BQ 6: Alternative Relationships and Governance Structures**

- Changing church needs some structure/guidance

- We do need guidelines
- Shared ministry cooperative so minister doesn't have to be at each meeting as per current *Manual*
- *The Manual* to reflect the changes for "shared worship and ministers"
- It presents a ministry model.
- New modeled of church governance are being developed – there is a need for General Council to revise *The Manual* to allow freedom of governance model and encourage innovation, but still provide guiding principles.
- Reduced oversight means additional criteria/guidelines would help.
- Flexibility is first more important and immediate need prior to "restrictions" but principles needed.
- GC should focus on denominational issues.
- Who can grant approval for modified governance structures.
- It is important for equity/fairness to ministers/charges in emerging multiple point shared ministries, feeling the need to attend five board meetings in five places.
- There is merit and urgency, but it is not clear as written. [However we cannot edit as it is from a Presbytery]
- Could we tweak language of quality to specifically refer to workplace justice?
- Why not make them a three point pastoral charge?
- Bigger issue: ministers are entitled to full-time work.
- Methodist tradition has ministers travelling from one place to the next.
- The workman is worth of the hire.
- If we're going to ask ministers to work long and complex situations, we should be paying well.
- For half-time: one service and emergency pastoral care.
- Concern: minister not being at Board meetings, while not having Presbytery.
- Suggestion that ministers see agenda before meeting (this is from a group of 5 pts) to save time (1 part time minister and 1 student minister)
- "old time" circuits may be useful in some areas

- other forms of communities of faith. Get in the Manual some form of structure. Into the governance of the church.
- Meetings need someone present as a delegate
- Changes done to *the Manual* problematic. We do have handbooks done much faster. Quality...
- We need some way to speed up process.
- Minimum standards have to be met.
- Faith communities often ignored i.e. in hospitals.
- Oversight helping new ways and give flexibility, facilitate some accountability needs to be there.
- Agree, but do not think it is necessary. May be obvious to some and not obvious to others.
- Accountability.

**p) BQ 7: Fairness in the new Funding Assessment model for Communities Of Faith who have raised funds for significant capital investments**

- Pastoral charges in the new funding model: capital fundraising will be assessed.
- Confusion
- Appears to be different between remit and funding model.
- Churches will be crippled and penalised
- We were not told that capital funding would be included when the remits were voted on.
- UCW will be taxed.
- What is the reasoning for this funding model to include capital funds.
- Depletes enthusiasm
- No stability in assessing this way.
- Funding model was not transparent. People have dug deep to fund those partial projects and now are penalized. Not fair.
- Some churches are having a large increase in assessments. Even fundraising is included.
- Funds raised for capital work on building will have a huge increase in assessment.
- Penalize anyone who wants to do a major improvement.

- Issue of getting on elevator – Sydenham – accessibility washrooms, etc.
- Ottawa Presbytery imploded [when it did this] because it discouraged good stewardship of property.
- Multi-point charges – if one improves all are assessed.
- There have been major mixed messages as to whether “building funds” are/are not included in new assessment model – different presbyteries received opposite responses.
- Why three years – this issue is about money for capital expenses.
- Line 38 (statistics) “Other Church appeals” needs clarification.
- If everyone is being equally taxed for non-church that are growing and big churches with capital maintenance expenses, it all balances out, hopefully.
- Despite fear, and desiring to find “loopholes” having a clear-cut form of dealing with assessments makes the burden easier and simpler as we settle into newness.
- Needs to be clarification. Passed on without approval.
- There is an explanation in the Questions and Answers that clarified that capital projected (e.g. new elevator fund) are NOT part of the base for assessment. Ongoing capital, e.g. roof repair is. This proposal is therefore built on a misconception and should be pulled.
- Does not apply for sale.

**q) BQ 8: Updating Our Theological Language**

- Touches on issue of Greta Vosper. Makes it acceptable not to believe, just to understand.
- Sensibility of modern people is one where people should say believe.
- Complicated; simplify
- We don’t support it, nor will we.
- I understand/I believe – the difference between our hearts and heads.
- Belief is not about head, it is about what we have in our hearts.

- Who are we to amend the Apostle's Creed.
- A statement of belief is your faith and you spend the rest of your life trying "to understand".
- We expanded what we have our ordinands [commissionands, DLM] to be in essential agreement with
- Some folks don't feel comfortable in saying the words.
- "how we use the words" as worship leaders, etc.
- Surely we have some bottom line.
- Do we change the language for those few or do we use this as a beginning/ongoing of the conversation.
- It's not about our statement of faith it is about what we do with them and we use and teach them.
- Not worthy of bringing forward because statements of faith are historical documents.
- This was not supported by the Presbytery, but from a person.
- Conference can't make a change, but can issue a new proposal on the same lines.
- Issue is peoples perceived discomfort with the word "belief".
- Comfort will be added with word understand.
- Are we trying to get away from "believing"? required belief?
- Is this an issue? Not convinced that it is!
- We love the option of sending it on or not.
- We are getting into another theology.
- Language is constantly shifting.
- Expand our language constantly, the experience of the divine shifts.
- Not just update language, to express our faith.
- To ascribe to a set doctrine, not necessary to rewrite historic statements. The creed is one of our foundational documents.
- What is difference between believing (heart) and understanding (brain)?
- Believe, commit; understand, no commitment.
- To move way from Theological reflection.
- Reflective believing = I believe in the grace of Christ.
- In our charges, use the language familiar. This might change at next level.
-

**r) BQ 9A/B: Proposal For Bay Of Quinte Conference (A) and General Council (B) To Work With UNESCO's Canadian Coalition Of Municipalities Against Racism And Discrimination**

- Complicity of all of us in racism
- Prophetic voice of church in partnership with UNESCO
- Role of pastor be a person the ...
- People don't understand how systemic racism is.
- Gives clergy permission to go to meetings we don't go to.
- Encourage to recognize local systemic racism.
- UNESCO = United Nations Educational Social Cultural Organization
- Should we be expanding including environmental, health, etc.
- This is a follow up to the UNESCO issue to which we are responding
- Based on a project that originated in Belleville.
- Asking to join God with what God is doing in the community.
- I wish that this was not necessary, but it is so.
- The pastoral charge and presbyteries that we serve are homogenous so we need to understand what others are experiencing.
- Why important to the church? What are the benefits to joining this or enlivening this project?
  - Aruna was encouraging people in our Presbytery to work with/collaborate with municipality.
  - Is this a mutual (working together) or encouraging of municipalities?
  - This is for churches to encourage our municipalities to live by the UNESCO coalition.
- Need to clarify – incredibly unclear and should be revised to clarify.
- It is just to encourage pastoral charges to encourage municipality: why no mention of education system – where does that fit in.
- In principal agreement.

- No mention of anti-Semitic racism.
- No mention of O "Bearing Faith Witness" UCC-Jewish Dialogue Statement.
- UNESCO in 2016, distanced themselves from Judaism and Jerusalem.
- Had a speaker at last Conference of Bay of Quinte, come out from Belleville, long history of oppression. Must be dealt with at Conference Level.
- History and Sacredness that was destroyed by colonialism, so it is our debt.
- Who would develop program?
- Should be delivered in the same-timeframe. Need knowledgeable persons to provide education.
- Need to open communication with at municipal level.
- Need to involve youth/young people.
- We need a deeper understanding of the pain of racism.
- Bay of Quinte could register a partnership with UNESCO.
- Has there been open dialogue?
- Is this a new stop for churches or are churches doing this already
- An amazing vehicle to tack into, to dialogue, to access funding.
- Someone in Belleville has been able to get municipal government to engage in UNESCO process.
- Once present structure changes, regional to continue on.
- Agree!!

#### Revisions//Additions

- Ensuring some distance/dialogue with UNESCO. – We want to work with you, but reserve right to lift concerns and questions.
- This proposal is too "solution focused". Need revision or be sent back until it is reworded and discerned some more.
- Letter could be sent out to all pastoral charges to approach municipalities. If we all work together doesn't difuse the energy helping committee to recognize this.

**s) BQ 10: Not limiting grant applications to one per Pastoral Charge when there exists single-point and multiple-point Pastoral Charges**

- Makes sense that different points would have different needs.
- We like the idea of making points work together, but should be possible for all congregations.
- Missing: more examples of grant that must change
- Feels discriminatory to multi-point charges, particularly cruel.
- Recognizes uniqueness and autonomy of each congregation
- Just issue for rural and remote churches
- Each church give the community dignity and respect.
- "Where two or three are gathered in my name"
- Moving ark of covenant from threshing floor to Jerusalem – how would those people experience.
- How do we support the remnant?
- Speaks to our ability to be present in community/ help congregations be relevant.
- How do we prevent grants from taking over from mission?
- To do it.
- GC and for reasons.
- Support proposal with wording changed: "that grant applications process be changed so that each congregation in a Pastoral Charge may apply for a grant".
- Suggestions: wording in motion is unnecessarily complicated – perhaps.
- Seciton 3: leave first sentence – delete second sentence.
- Strongly feel need to delete "penalizing...our destruction" in top of page 2.
- We recommend that the proposal be revised and the revised proposal be passed on to General Council.
- Perhaps clarification that this refers to grants from General Council.
- Grants to Pastoral Charges –
  - Personal experience three churches with very different needs. It would be inequitable to give a grant to only one.

- Also the case in the assessment issue.
- Creative way to respond
  - General Council and regions would have the grant policies.
  - Lack of information sharing about what grant money is available.
  - Assess each congregation's need and decide how to ease grants for these.
- Not fair to one point or two point charge.
- "No brainer"
- Community of faith? Each point in multi point charge or whole pastoral charge
- Establish a principle
- When you have several points coming together is that considered for 1 grant per point/charge
- Recommendation = clarify
- Does it have to be a common subject for all involved when it comes to grant.
- Pass on as is!!
-