
Appendix A**GCE SUMMARY, SEPT. 22-23, 2023**
Posted on: September 25, 2023 by Lori-Ann Livingston

The General Council Executive (GCE) met virtually Sept. 22–23, 2023. Each day, the GCE began by committing to [Equity Aspirations](#) (About Anti-Racism webpage > Downloads) and Holy Manners. On both days, the Moderator grounded the meeting in worship, with reflections on Psalm 23. She also shared a hymn in French, “[En Toi, ma confiance](#)” by Emmanuel Music, and Bobby McFerrin’s *a capella* choir singing [23rd Psalm](#).

The two-day meeting was punctuated by equity check-ins from the equity team, prayer and reflection. Highlights from the meeting include the following:

Principles-based Justice

Following on the decisions of GC44, and the commitment of the General Secretary, the Executive received proposed principles to guide The United Church of Canada’s justice work. Jennifer Janzen-Ball, Executive Minister for Theology and Ministry Leadership presented work of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee (TCIF) in developing a principles-based approach to justice aligned with policies, affirmations, and commitments that the church has already made. The principles are intentionally interdependent and written primarily to guide the work of the national staff and national committees, but not limited to it.

The seven principles are equal in value; the working group did not assign how the principles are applied, but urged they be tested over the next year-and-a-half:

- Anti-oppression
- Truth-telling
- Holistic scope
- Respect for human dignity
- Full participation and decolonization
- Equity, mutuality, respect, and reparations
- Costly and prophetic solidarity

All three related recommendations were passed: the principles were adopted in principle; the proposal will be sent to General Council for discussion and decision Oct. 21, 2023, and further conversation with the Indigenous Church will discuss ways to include the seven sacred teachings in the principles document.

Leadership for the 2020s

In further work from GC43, five proposals presented to the GCE about eliminating functional distinctions between Designated Lay Ministers and Ordered Ministry were all carried, and will be presented to the General Council for discussion and decision on Oct. 21, 2023. The proposals addressed:

- Current DLMs and DLM candidates;
- A pathway to Testamur;
- The responsibilities of regional councils;
- Future candidates without undergraduate degrees, and finally,
- Those who retired as DLMs.

The proposal strongly urges regional councils to review their practices around eligibility and licensing to people who retired as DLMs, since these are executed unevenly across the country.

Former mission properties in the Democratic Republic of Korea

The General Council Executive supported a proposal to renounce claims to former mission properties owned by the United Church in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (also known as North Korea). The request for the renunciation came from the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK).

In 2021, the PROK passed a declaration outlining a request for claims to ownership of property left behind in the North to be renounced, as a concrete step towards reconciliation. It also calls upon the churches in South Korea to curtail plans for described by the PROK as "imperialistic" mission of North Korean society; since the time of the Korean war, many church denominations in South Korea have drawn up plans for aggressive re-evangelization of the North.

Operational Plan Quarterly Report

The GCE received the second quarter report on the GCO's strategic plan. This quarter included key changes to General Council units for stronger alignment with the plan. The Q2 results of the operational plan are consistent with Q1 in making solid progress on the strategic objectives.

About 35% of the activities have fully met their planned key results for this quarter with 100% completion. The average completion of key results in activated areas of all the activities is 77% (similar to 76% in Q1).

COLA and grant decisions first step in 2024 budget process

The General Council Executive considered principles related to the 2024 General Council budget, which will be approved in November. These principles include an anticipated budget deficit not to exceed \$3.2 million, with overall grant reductions in the range of \$2.6 to \$3.3 million, following the recommendations of a grants review and global partnership review. Among these grant reductions will be a 25% cut in Mission and Service grants to regions and a 25% reduction to global partner grants.

Other aspects of the budget framework relate to the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA). The GCE made decisions regarding COLA within a context of addressing competing pressures. Fundamental to the consideration was a commitment to fairly support ministry personnel; deep concern about current pressures on local congregations, and our effort to retain the current and needed staff complement in our regional and General Council offices through 2024.

While the commitment to be a fair and decent employer remains a core value, financial sustainability needs to be factored into how the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is administered. The GCE decided that, going forward, COLA decisions will be decoupled from the Consumer Price Index (CPI) common index of the previous year, as has been our policy. Although this is a change from an absolute link, CPI will continue to be a factor in the COLA decisions. With the commitment to compensating paid accountable personnel as well and as fairly as possible. The GCE also decided to decouple the General Council staff system from the pastoral relations staff system in decisions regarding COLA.

After deep and thoughtful deliberations, the GCE decided that staff in the General Council system would receive 2% COLA in 2024. Retaining the practice of aligning COLA with CPI this year for staff could have triggered layoffs, or deeper grant cuts.

Ministry personnel will receive 6.3% in 2024, which is in line with CPI indicator. However, the decisions give notice that such an outcome—COLA automatically reflecting CPI—is not to be expected in subsequent years.

The General Council mandated the establishment of a Total Compensation Task Group to look at all aspects of compensation within the church. Its findings, based on data analysis on regional and equity bases and comparisons to other sectors, will help guide future practice as we seek to balance fair, equitable compensation and the sustainability for communities of faith. An interim report was requested, to help guide decisions for 2025, by fall of 2024.

Code of Conduct policy

The General Council Executive adopted an updated policy addressing conduct, which was last updated in February 2020. While there is no change to the existing policy, the update provides clarity around conduct standards, and aligns those expectations to the guiding principles as defined in the Call and Vision, the Core Competency framework and relevant legislation.

Pension and benefits

Core group health and dental benefits, and life insurance, remain unchanged, except for long-term disability (LTD); the cost of LTD decreased for employees by 10% to 2.33% of pensionable earnings.

To review the proposals and reports provided for the GCE for this meeting, go to commons.united-church.ca > Governance > General Council Executive > GC44 Executive (2022-2025) > Meeting Documents > 2023-09-22-23 GCE.

LIVING INTO RIGHT RELATIONS REPORT TO CrNRC OCTOBER 2023

First complete translation of the Bible into an Indigenous language in Canada.

On September 9th many members of the Conseil Régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council had the privilege of attending the dedication service of the newly launched Mohawk Bible. Given the



legacy of Canada's residential schools, the emotional and empowering significance of this history-making achievement was palpable; the celebratory service was very moving. There was wonderful fellowship at the feast after the service where many members of the Mohawk community were acknowledged with the gift of a Mohawk Bible.



On October 1st, the Mohawk Bible was again celebrated at St James United Church as they honoured the labour of Harvey Satewas Gabriel and the long history of friendship between the people of Kanesatake and St. James.

They honoured the memory of Satewas' great grandfather - Onesakenarat, (Chief Joseph / Sosé), who had translated the Gospels into Mohawk -- by making a pilgrimage up to Mount Royal Cemetery to visit his grave. (See photo of Satewas at his great grandfather's grave.)



Here are some links to recent news articles

APT NEWS:

<https://www.tiktok.com/@aptnnews/video/7283953030960090373>

Bible Society:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FEpnF-CMWc>

City News <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pl6cR81107I>

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of le conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council

and The Living Spirit Fund at The United Church of Canada Foundation



Living into Right Relations hires a coordinator for the Respect & Kanaronkwatshéra Project



After a summer hiatus we were pleased to interview and hire Maude Paradis whose preferred name is her Jewish one, Aviyah Abrams, to be the coordinator of our LIRRLT initiative to help us network with organizations committed to justice, following the requests and examples of Indigenous-led programs.

Along with this networking, we are going to co-create peaceful and imaginative events that invite our fellow citizens to join us in advocating for justice, insisting that now is the time to establish life-affirming legislation and programs that address and eradicate systemic racism, housing and food insecurity among other justice concerns.

We invite you to hear these words from Aviyah.

“My personal views and professional objectives are firmly aligned with the opportunity to contribute to a meaningful program that aims to develop respectful relationships and justice between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.



I'm committed to tackling the injustices listed in the project description, including racism, inaccessible and subpar health care, unfair child welfare, food insecurity, and housing inequality. In addition, I am thrilled about the chance to collaborate with several human rights and justice groups in Quebec, highlighting Indigenous-led initiatives to promote awareness and cooperation. My belief that innovative approaches may be used to create inclusive and just communities is congruent with the use of creative and peaceful public actions to spur change.

In addition to addressing institutional racism and prejudice, housing injustices, food insecurity, and child welfare injustices, I also want to help the project achieve its goals by forming connections with local human rights organizations, rallying affinity groups for advocacy, and planning a series of activities that encourage positive change.”

MMIWG (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls) Vigil

October 4 is recognized in Canada as the National Day of Action on Missing and Murdered Women and Girls, Trans and Two-Spirit people. At 6pm on October 4, LLIR’s Cameron Gray and Read Sherman were present at Cabot Square in downtown Montreal to heed the call of the organizers of this year’s Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Trans and Two-Spirit (MMIWG2S) Vigil.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of le conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council

and The Living Spirit Fund at The United Church of Canada Foundation



Led by Iskweu Project, a Native Women's Shelter of Montreal initiative responding to the needs of families in the case of an Indigenous woman or girl, trans or two-spirit going missing, and by the Centre for Gender Advocacy, it began with drumming songs and a prayer by elder Delbert Sampson. Iskweu Project Coordinator Laura Aguilar emceed the vigil, welcoming everyone both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous. Then came testimonies from people like Cheryl McDonald, sister of Carleen who went missing in 1988, and who was later found dead in the woods, and Irene, originally from Arctic Bay, Nunavut who could barely speak about the death of her mother, murdered by her brother in 2005, by implication the result of the hardship and trauma faced by many Inuit living in the North.

To hear such testimonies was important, as settlers and United Church people. It takes courage to tell such painful stories, and yet as was said again and again "they need to be told," not only as acts of personal healing but also so that such pain and stories might be shared with others in the wider society. Organizers called for all of us to put pressure on those who can raise the funding levels for organizations dedicated to helping and healing Indigenous peoples, especially women, girls, trans and two-spirited, who are too often the most visible and vulnerable to abuse, attack, abduction, trafficking, murder.

Many at the gathering wore red dresses - referencing the Red Dress Campaign - a May 5 National Day of Awareness for Indigenous MMIWG2S People. Others wore orange shirts - referencing Orange Shirt Day - a Sept 30 national day to remember the Indigenous children who attended Indian Residential Schools and especially those we now know never made it home. Cam and Read, were humbled to be able to be present among many others wanting to listen and learn. It is important to remember, to listen to those whose lives are so devastated by the impact of colonial, racist policies, and attitudes both past and present, as well as the misogyny that causes too many women, girls, trans, and two-spirit individuals such harm. Devastated yes, but also so strong and courageous. It is important to listen and to act as called upon that justice and healing might come for these women, families, and communities...and ultimately for all of us.

Changes coming to the (KBE)Kairos Blanket Exercise



The new model of the KBE is being rolled out. Organizations and individuals offering the KBE will become partners and moving to a model that is fully Indigenous led. There are many implications both good and some challenging to be able to continue offering this vital educational tool to the Canadian public.

LIRR will be exploring ways to continue to partner with Indigenous organizations and Peoples in a more formal way to support Kairos' wish to make this tool intentionally Indigenous led. Stay tuned for additional details in the near future.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of le conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council

and The Living Spirit Fund at The United Church of Canada Foundation



Updates on the plan to ensure all communities of faith in the CrNRC are equipped to vote on Remit 1

The region held two information sessions both in English and French in October to offer support to those wanting more information on the remit. In addition, the region has used both social media and the newsletter to publicize information and resources for all communities on this important topic. Volunteer caller teams are actively connecting with all our communities of faith across the region to ensure they have the tools and knowledge to vote on this critical remit to create a National Indigenous Organization within the United Church. While most of the communications have been positive, there has been across all of the region, the need to educate members on both the implications of the vote, as well as to counter disinformation on this remit.



Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Byer-de Wever, Jan Jorgensen and Read Sherman

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of le conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council

and The Living Spirit Fund at The United Church of Canada Foundation



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
FOUNDATION



CONSEIL RÉGIONAL
NAKONHA:KA
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Appendix C^(EN)

Supporting Networks and Clusters
David-Roger Gagnon, Minister
Conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council Executive

Cluster Development Work

- For the *West Island & Riverside Cluster*, several communities of faith participated in the shared worship on October 1st for World Communion Sunday at Riverside United Church.
- For the *Saint-Francis Cluster*, meetings will resume October 25th. The project to establish a collaborative approach to pastoral presence is on pause, but the project for a position of shared treasurer is advancing.
- For the *South Shore & Valleys Cluster*, they met on the 12th of September to review the celebration at Kahnawà:ke as well as to share information on events this Autumn. The possibility of a joint programme on line was discussed.
- For the *LAM Cluster* (Laurentian Area Ministries), my efforts continue to find resources for the communities of faith and for possible joint programming.
- For *Yamaska-Shefford*, the communities of faith will share the 3 worship services for the 5th Sundays of this liturgical year.
- There conversation continues with communities of faith in the *Missisquoi* sector to explore the possibility of collaboration. A new CoF has joined the conversation.

Network Development Work -Leadership Teams and Circles

- The Team for the *Strategic Plan*, VisionAction, has completed a series of 8 public consultations on the propositions which we have collected at the beginning of the process. These personal and general invitations were sent several times by several methods. Even if the number of participants of each consultation was more modest, the quality of conversations was very rich and the harvest of information will be of great help to us to articulate a proposed strategic plan for the Regional Council's November meeting. A BIG THANK YOU to the members of VisionAction, and especially, our animation team: Helen Hliaras, Cathy Hamilton and Marc Grenon. We have consulted with a diverse representation of populations of our Regional Council, and I believe that our report will reflect this. There is still the possibility of more, smaller consultations with 3 target populations to complete the portrait.
- The « *Living in Right Relations* » consultations have now taken place for Remit # 1. And the Living in Right Relations Circle is playing an important role in the awareness raising process by a direct telephone campaign to communities of faith.
- The « *Justice & Communities* » wishes to resume activities shortly.
- « *Pride & Friends* » Network: For the moment, the network is on pause.
- The *Affirm United Process Group* will resume its activities in November.
- The « *Environment* » Network: Judy Coffin continues to share information for events and we are encouraging members to connect with the Green Faith project.

Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Montréal

The Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Greater Montréal has shared the following statement on the situation in Israel and Palestine:



DIALOGUE JUDÉO-CHRÉTIEN DE MONTRÉAL
CHRISTIAN JEWISH DIALOGUE OF MONTREAL

Montreal, October 11, 2023 For immediate release

Statement of the Christian Jewish Dialogue of Montreal on the situation in Israel and Gaza

The members of the Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Montreal share in the world's shock and horror at the current situation in Israel and Gaza.

We mourn the senseless slaughter and taking of hostages on the night of Simchat Torah. We stand in solidarity with our Jewish members and friends and with the larger Jewish community in this time of grief and fear.

We offer our hopes, prayers, and efforts for the cessation of violence and for the establishment for a just and lasting peace.

Retreat for All who offer Ministry in the Nakonha:ka Family

The retreat took place on the 29th and 30th of September and 1st of October at Manoir D'Youville with 43 people attending on Saturday, which was the co-learning day. A VERY BIG THANK YOU to the planning team: Lee Ann Hogle, Valerie Epps-Nickson, Christine-Marie Gladu, Daniel Hayward, Marc Grenon, Éric Hébert-Daly, as well as our workshop animators: Virginia Wallace, Guillaume Tremblay (L'Heureux naufrage), Rabbi Sherril Gilbert and Rabbi Schachar Orenstein, Jessica Gauthier and Michel Gauthier, and Frank Lofeodo. A special thanks to Jessica & Michel Gauthier, as well as to Aron Molnar, who joined the liturgy team upon arrival at the retreat, for liturgies which were moving, inspiring and full of life. Thank you to All those who trusted us by deciding to embark on this retreat experience. Thank you to All !

Ensemble, Chantons! – Then, Let Us Sing! – Hymnal Project

The Sampler is now ready for CoFs who wish to evaluate the hymns that are suggested for inclusion in the new collection. If your CoF wishes to take part in the process of evaluation of the Sampler, please, let me know.

The Birth of New Faith Communities –

The new Ministère francophone de Longueuil (MFdL) continues to grow. Conversations are advancing with Saint Lambert United Church. The community centre (a former school) used by le MFdL will no longer be available as of the 1st of November. A more formal conversation with Saint Lambert United Church progresses, giving much hope. The community of faith wishes that the Regional Council could look into the attribution of a status for the new MFdL in the hopes of facilitating negotiations for a long-term partnership between the two communities.

David-Roger Gagnon, M.A.S.P.

Minister Supporting Networks and Clusters

Soutien aux réseaux et aux regroupements**David-Roger Gagnon, responsable****21 septembre 2023****Exécutif du Conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council****Travail – développement des Regroupements**

- Pour le regroupement de *l'Ouest de l'Île & Riverside*, plusieurs paroisses ont participé dans un culte partagé pour le 1^{er} octobre pour le dimanche mondial de la Communion à l'Église Unie Riverside.
- Pour le regroupement *Saint-François*, les réunions reprennent le 25 octobre. Le projet pour établir une approche collaborative de présence pastorale est mise sur pause, mais le projet pour un poste de trésorier partagé avance.
- Le regroupement *Rive-Sud & Vallées* s'est réuni le 12 septembre pour faire le bilan de la célébration à Kahnawà:ke, ainsi pour partager les renseignements sur les événements cet automne. La possibilité d'un programme conjoint en ligne a été discutée.
- Pour le regroupement *LAM* (MRL - Ministères régionaux des Laurentides), mes démarches continuent pour trouver des ressources pour les paroisses pour de possibles programmes conjoints.
- Pour le groupe *Yamaska-Shefford*, les paroisses vont partager les 3 cultes sur les 5^e dimanches cette année liturgique.
- La conversation continue avec des paroisses dans le secteur *Missisquoi* pour explorer une possible collaboration. Une nouvelle paroisse s'est jointe à la conversation.

Travail – le développement des Réseaux – Équipes et Cercles de Leadership

- L'Équipe pour le *Plan stratégique*, VisionAction, a complété une série de 8 consultations publiques sur les propos que nous avons récoltés en début du processus. Des invitations personnelles et générales ont été envoyées à plusieurs reprises par plusieurs méthodes. Même si le nombre de participant.e.s de chaque consultation a été plus modeste, la qualité des conversations ont été très riches et la récolte des données va nous aider grandement à articuler un propos de plan stratégique pour la réunion du Conseil régional en novembre. Un GRAND MERCI aux membres de VisionAction, et surtout, notre équipe d'animation : Helen Hliaras, Cathy Hamilton, et Marc Grenon. Nous avons consulté avec une diverse représentation des populations de notre Conseil régional, et je crois que notre rapport va refléter cela. Il reste la possibilité de plus petites consultations avec 3 populations cibles pour compléter le portrait.
- Le Cercle de leadership « *Relations justes* »; les consultations ont eu lieu sur la Remise Numéro 1. Et le Cercle de leadership Relations Justes joue un rôle important dans le processus de sensibilisation par une campagne de coup de téléphone directe aux communautés de foi.
- L'équipe de Leadership « *Justice et communautés* » souhaite reprendre ses activités sous peu.
- Le réseau « *Fierté et amies et ami.e.s* » : Pour le moment, le réseau est en pause.
- Groupe du Processus *S'Affirmer ensemble* reprendra ses activités en début novembre.
- Le réseau « *Environnement* » : Judy Coffin continue de partager les renseignements pour les événements et nous encourageons les membres de se connecter avec le projet la Foi verte (Green Faith).

Dialogue Judéo-Chrétien de grand Montréal

Le Dialogue Judéo-Chrétien de Grand Montréal a partagé l'énoncé suivant sur la situation en Israël et en Palestine :



DIALOGUE JUDÉO-CHRÉTIEN DE MONTRÉAL
CHRISTIAN JEWISH DIALOGUE OF MONTREAL

Montréal, 11 octobre 2023 Pour publication immédiate**Déclaration du Dialogue judéo-chrétien de Montréal sur la situation en Israël et à Gaza**

Les membres du Dialogue judéo-chrétien de Montréal partagent le choc et l'horreur du monde face à la situation actuelle en Israël et à Gaza.

Nous déplorons le massacre insensé et la prise d'otages dans la nuit de Simchat Torah. Nous sommes solidaires de nos membres et amis juifs et de l'ensemble de la communauté juive en cette période de deuil et de crainte.

Nous partageons nos espoirs, nos prières et nos efforts pour que cesse la violence et que s'établisse une paix juste et durable.

Retraite Pour Toustes qui offrent un Ministère dans la Famille Nakonha:ka

La retraite a eu lieu le 29,30 septembre et 1^{er} octobre au Manoir D'Youville avec 43 personnes dans l'assistance le samedi, qui était la journée de co-apprentissage. Un TRÈS GRAND merci à l'équipe de planification : Lee Ann Hogle, Valerie Epps-Nickson, Christine-Marie Gladu, Daniel Hayward, Marc Grenon, Éric Hébert-Daly, ainsi que nos animatrices & animateurs d'ateliers : Virginia Wallace, Guillaume Tremblay (L'Heureux naufrage), Rabbin Sherril Gilbert et Rabbin Schachar Orenstein, Jessica Gauthier et Michel Gauthier, et Frank Lofeodo. Un remerciement spécial à Jessica & Michel Gauthier, ainsi que Aron Molnar, qui s'est joint à l'équipe liturgique en arrivant à la retraite, pour des liturgies émouvantes, inspirantes et pleines de vie. Merci à Toustes qui nous ont fait confiance en décidant d'embarquer dans cette expérience de retraite!

Merci à Toustes!

Ensemble, Chantons! – Then, Let Us Sing! - Projet de recueil de chants

L'échantillon est maintenant prêt pour les paroisses qui souhaitent essayer et évaluer les chants qui sont suggérés pour inclusion dans la nouvelle collection. Si votre paroisse souhaite faire partie du processus d'évaluation de l'échantillon, s'il vous plaît, faites-moi signe.

La Naissance de nouvelles communautés de foi –

Le nouveau Ministère francophone de Longueuil (MFdL) continue de grandir. Des conversations avancent avec l'Église Unie Saint-Lambert. Le centre communautaire (une ancienne école) utilisé par le MFdL ne sera plus disponible à partir du 1^{er} novembre. Une conversation plus formelle avec l'Église Unie Saint-Lambert progresse, donnant beaucoup d'espoir. La paroisse souhaite que le Conseil régional puisse se pencher sur l'attribut d'un statut pour le nouveau MFdL afin de faciliter les négociations pour un partenariat à long terme entre les deux communautés.

David-Roger Gagnon, M.A.S.P.

Responsable des réseaux et des regroupements