

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

East Central Ontario Regional Council Living Mission

POLICY NAME: East Central Ontario Regional Council Living Mission	Date Approved: May 22, 2019
	Review date:
Purpose: This policy outlines the living mission of the Region, the authority and compliance, membership, responsibilities and annual meetings.	

Living Mission Statement

"Seeking to be aligned with God's new and renewing Spirit", we affirm that we are the United Church of Canada in the East Central Ontario Regional Council seeking to live out God's call to us – valuing equity, inclusiveness, and difference committing to full participation of people of all racialized groups, physical and mental abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities, ages, economic and social status, in the life and work of the East Central Ontario Regional Council.

We affirm that we are called to be conciliar church

- called to care for each other;
- care for creation;
- foster connections;
- maintain and build relationships between the courts of the church;
- support our existing and new ministries,
- encourage, facilitate and support ministries within the East Central Ontario Regional Council becoming and continuing to be Affirming Ministries.
- while working in partnership with other denominations , faiths, and community groups.

Purpose

The Manual C.2.4

The East Central Ontario Regional Council is responsible for encouraging and engaging in

- a) joining our collective hearts, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world;
- b) local, regional, national, and global initiatives and partnerships (community, ecumenical, and interfaith) for ministry, mission, and justice work;
- c) ministry with children, youth, and young adults;
- d) honouring and living into intercultural mission and ministry; and

Honouring and living into intercultural mission and ministry is described in Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church, a resource available from the General Council Office.

- e) living in covenant with Mother Earth and All My Relations in the Earth community.

Authority / Compliance

The East Central Ontario Regional Council and East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders will follow all policies outlined or referred to in The Manual of the United Church of Canada, or as required by federal, provincial or municipal laws.

Limitations

The Manual C.2.14

All responsibility of the Regional Council is subject to

- a) policies set by the General Council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, candidacy, ministry personnel, property, and any other area within the authority of the General Council; and
- b) the authority of the General Council to assume control of the Regional Council in extraordinary circumstances where the Regional Council is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or Regional Council policies.

Membership

The Manual C.1 (includes C.1.1. – C.1.3)

The Regional Council consists of members of the order of ministry, other ministry personnel, lay members of the United Church, and leaders of associate member ministries, all as set out in sections C.1.1 to C.1.3 below.

“Ministry personnel” is a general term that refers to members of the order of ministry, designated lay ministers, candidates serving under appointment, diaconal supply, and ordained supply. For more information on these categories of ministry personnel, see Entering Ministry H.1.1 and H.1.2.

There must be a balance between the members in the membership categories in section C.1.1 and C.1.2 below where possible.

Members of the Order of Ministry and Other Ministry Personnel

The Manual C.1.1

The following ministry personnel are members of the Regional Council:

- a) members of the order of ministry within the bounds served by the Regional Council; and
- b) other ministry personnel in a covenantal relationship with a community of faith within the bounds of the Regional Council.

Lay Members

The Manual C.1.2

Communities of faith that are congregations or pastoral charges continue to elect representatives to the Regional Council in the same way they elected representatives to the presbytery prior to January 1, 2019. They may also change the way in which they elect representatives within denominational policies, with the agreement of the Regional Council, and by including it in the covenant between the community of faith and Regional Council.

The lay members of the Regional Council are members of the United Church who are not ministry personnel and who are

- a) elected by communities of faith on the following basis:
 - i) one representative from each community of faith with 100 or fewer members;
 - ii) two representatives from each community of faith with 101 to 200 members;
 - iii) three representatives from each community of faith with 201 to 300 members;
 - iv) four representatives from each community of faith with more than 300 resident members; and
- b) additional lay members as determined by the Regional Council if necessary to respect a balance of ministry personnel and lay members who are not ministry personnel in the membership of the Regional Council.

Leaders of Associate Member Ministries

The Manual C.1.3

The Regional Council includes people in formal ministry leadership in those communities of faith of other denominations

- a) that have been granted associate membership in the United Church based on policies set by the Executive of the General Council; and
- b) that are located within the bounds of the Regional Council.

A community of faith of another denomination may be granted associate membership in the United Church based on policies set by the Executive of the General Council.

The Region has power / authority to add members to the Regional Council.

Responsibilities

Covenanting

The Manual C.2.1

The Regional Council is responsible for

- a) recognizing a new community of faith by entering into a covenantal relationship with it;
- b) living in a covenantal relationship with each community of faith, with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;
- c) approving changes to the covenantal relationship with the community of faith from time to time, including structural changes, amalgamations, realignments, and disbanding of communities of faith; and

The Regional Council's responsibilities in the life cycle of a community of faith that is a congregation or pastoral charge are set out in more detail in Congregational Life G.1.

- d) living in a covenantal relationship with ministry personnel.

Services for Communities of Faith

The Manual C.2.2

The Regional Council is responsible for

- a) providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in human resource matters;
- b) providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in dealing with congregational property;
- c) managing regional archives;
- d) providing ongoing leadership training for ministry personnel and lay people; and
- e) providing funding partnerships with United Church educational and leadership training centres and camps as determined by the Regional Council.

Service, Support, and Oversight of Communities of Faith

The Manual C.2.3

The Regional Council is responsible for

- a) reviewing the self-assessments of communities of faith in light of the covenant between the community of faith and the Regional Council;
- b) supporting emerging new ministries;
- c) supporting communities of faith in their life and work;
- d) promoting articulation of mission and ministry;
- e) ensuring compliance with the policies and polity of the United Church and reviewing any relevant records;

The “polity” of the United Church means the form of organization and government of the United Church as it is set out in these bylaws.

- f) hearing appeals from communities of faith and their governing bodies; and
- g) assuming control of a community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational policies.

Policy and Finance

The Manual C.2.5

The Regional Council is responsible for

- a) administering policy set by the General Council, and setting appropriate regional policy;
- b) participating in determining priorities for mission and ministry work through the Mission & Service fund; and
- c) setting and managing its annual budget, including revenue from the denominational assessment, and setting any additional regional assessment for any additional services the Regional Council wishes to undertake.

Property

The Manual C.2.6

The Regional Council is responsible for

- a) co-operating with the community of faith in buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith property, and distributing any proceeds within denominational policies and guidelines, including
 - i) making decisions on requests from communities of faith to buy, sell, mortgage,

exchange, renovate, lease, or otherwise deal with community of faith property; The Regional Council makes decisions relating to the property of amalgamating congregations. See congregational Life G.1.4.5.

- ii) making decisions on the meaning of the terms “other major assets” and “major renovations” for that Regional Council;

The terms “other major assets” and “major renovations” are explained in Congregational Life G.2.1.2 and G.2.1.3.

- iii) communicating the meanings of those terms to each community of faith within the bounds served by the Regional Council; and

There are three exceptions to the Regional Council’s responsibility for making decisions about the property of communities of faith that are congregations. They are set out in Congregational Life G.2.2.2, G.2.2.3, and G.2.2.4.

- b) making decisions on the property of communities of faith remaining after the communities of faith cease to exist; and
- c) buying, selling, leasing, and renovating regional property, and distributing any proceeds within denominational guidelines.

Preparation for Ministry

The Manual C.2.7

The Regional Council is responsible for

- a) celebrating the approval of applicants for candidacy;
- b) ordaining and commissioning members of the order of ministry;
- c) recognizing designated lay ministers;
- d) licensing licensed lay worship leaders; and
- e) celebrating admissions and readmissions.

Some responsibilities are delegated and some are the responsibility of the Regional Council.

Annual Meeting

The Regional Council will meet in person for the first year 2019 and the Assembly of Elders will make a recommendation to the Regional Council regarding future annual meetings.

“MOTION (/) That Regional Council meets ... ”

Annual Meeting Requirement

The Manual C.4.1

The Regional Council must meet at least annually.

The annual meeting may be a meeting of the entire Regional Council or the Assembly of Elders of the Regional Council, as determined by the Regional Council.

Meetings: General

The Manual C.4.2

The Regional Council must decide

- a) whether and, if so, how often it will meet regularly between annual meetings as the entire Regional Council or the executive;
- b) the time and place for the annual and other regular meetings, and the procedure for calling annual and other regular meetings; and
- c) how it will hold special meetings for urgent business between regular meetings.

Minimum numbers of members

Minimum Number of Members at Meetings

The Manual C.4.3

The Regional Council may meet only if a minimum number of members is present. For meetings of either the Regional Council or its executive,

- a) if there are fewer than 60 members, at least 1/3 of them must be present;
- b) if there are 60 or more members, at least 20 members must be present; and
- c) there must be at least one ministry personnel and one lay member who is not ministry personnel present.

Corresponding members are not counted for this purpose.

The Assembly of Elders may make a recommendation to the East Central Ontario Regional Council in 2020 regarding minimum numbers of members.