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Draft statement from the Boundaries Commission

January 10, 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.

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.

The chart below illustrates the interim decision of the Commission and describes 17 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 chart includes a hyperlink for each regional council. The regional councils are simply numbered at this time. Each pastoral charge is colour-coded in relation to its location in its regional council. The location points on each map may not be geographically exact, but you can see the intent of the Commission regarding the [location of each pastoral charge](#).

Regional Council Number (going west to east)	Description of Regional Council	Approximate Number of Pastoral Charges within Regional Council
1	Comox-Nanaimo Presbytery, Victoria Presbytery, Prince Rupert Presbytery, Vancouver-Burrard Presbytery, Westminster Presbytery, Yukon Territory, Amazing Grace PC, Crossroads PC, Colebrook PC, Peninsula PC, Bethany-Newton PC, Northwood PC, Cloverdale PC, The United Churches of Langley PC, Aldergrove PC, and Webster’s Whonnock PC	108

<u>2</u>	Mount Lehman PC, Gladwin Heights/St. Andrew's PC, Trinity Memorial, Mount Shannon PC, Chilliwack PC, Carman PC, Rosedale PC, Agassiz PC, Hope PC, Cariboo Presbytery, Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery, Kootenay Presbytery, Fort Nelson: Hillcrest PC, Fort St. John: St. Luke's PC, South Peace PC, Hudson's Hope: St. Peter's PC, and Chetwynd Shared Ministry PC	78
<u>3</u>	Province of Alberta north of and including Hwy 13 and the Northwest Territories	99
<u>4</u>	Province of Alberta south of Hwy 13	93
<u>5</u>	Province of Saskatchewan	179
<u>6</u>	Province of Manitoba	133
<u>7</u>	Manitou Conference, Cambrian Presbytery, and Algoma Presbytery	93
<u>8</u>	Elgin Presbytery, Essex Presbytery, Kent Presbytery, Lambton Presbytery, Middlesex Presbytery, and Oxford Presbytery	143
<u>9</u>	Huron-Perth Presbytery, Bruce Presbytery, Waterloo Presbytery, and Northern Waters Presbytery north of Hwy 9 and in Wellington County (Erin PC)	146
<u>10</u>	Erie Presbytery, Halton Presbytery, Hamilton Presbytery, Niagara Presbytery, Halton Region with its parts of South West Presbytery (Norval PC, St. John's PC, St. Andrew's, Georgetown PC) and Northern Waters Presbytery (Ballinafad PC, Acton PC)	149
<u>11</u>	Living Waters Presbytery save Region of Durham, Toronto Southeast Presbytery, South West Presbytery save Halton Region, and Northern Waters Presbytery south of Hwy 9 save Wellington County	159
<u>12</u>	Lakeridge Presbytery, Kawartha Highlands Presbytery, Hills and Shores Presbytery, Shining Waters Presbytery, Kente Presbytery, Four Winds Presbytery, Four Rivers Presbytery save the seven pastoral charges located in Lanark County (Carleton Place: Zion-Memorial, Rideau Ferry: Bethel PC, Lanark-Balderson, Perth-St. Paul's, Smiths Falls: Trinity, Bathurst, Boyd's-Franktown), Uxbridge: Trinity PC, Sandford-Zephyr PC, and Goodwood-Epsom-Utica PC (Living Waters	164

	Presbytery, Township of Uxbridge, Region of Durham)	
13	Upper Valley Presbytery, the seven pastoral charges located in Lanark County (see above), Ottawa Presbytery, Seaway Valley Presbytery, and l'Église Saint-Marc (CL)	120
14	Le Consistoire Laurentien (save l'Église Saint-Marc) and le Consistoire du Québec	79
15	Province of New Brunswick including all of Miramichi Presbytery and Province of PEI	118
16	Province of Nova Scotia and Bermuda Synod	142
17	Province of Newfoundland and Labrador	88

Feedback and suggestions on this interim decision will be accepted until January 31, 2018, at remits@united-church.ca. Requests for changes in relationship to a regional council need to be made by the governing body of your church court at regchange@united-church.ca by January 31, 2018. The Commission's final decision will be shared widely by March 15, 2018.

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

We present this interim decision 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.



Andrew Richardson, Chair

Boundaries Commission Members

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Marion Pardy

Janet Sigurdson

Lorraine Stewart

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P.S.: Boundaries Commission Chairperson, the Rev. Andrew Richardson, will host a YouTube Live event on the Commission's processes on January 15, 2018: 10:00 a.m. PST; 11:00 a.m. MST; 12:00 noon CST; 1:00 p.m. EST; 2:00 p.m. AST; 2:30 p.m. NST. It will be recorded and available on www.youtube.com/unitedchurchofcanada.