

REMIT:

AUTONOMOUS
INDIGENOUS
ORGANIZATION
WITHIN THE
UNITED
CHURCH

Voting continues through March 2024



Remit conversation and decisions: A process for pastoral charge Boards or Councils

A Regional overview of all resources related to the Remit is available on all three Regional Council websites:

[Northern Spirit](#)

[Living Skies](#)

[Prairie to Pine](#)

[Click here for the General Council 44 web page](#) of voting materials and resources.

Making the time to discuss and discern

Hold a special meeting if possible. If this isn't possible, consider dividing this process into two parts. This reflects the process used at Regional and General Council meetings:

Learning and Reflection, then

Discuss and Decide.

Where possible, it may be best to hold the conversation over two meetings. The process below reflects this. This can allow time for people who prefer to take time to reflect on new information. However you do this, this isn't a five minute agenda item. Take the time to discern and to listen to one another. The suggested process for Learning and Reflection is about one hour.

Two concrete practices: try to listen to understand; this is not the same as listening to respond. Choose a small symbol and pass it around as you speak.

Suggestions for work in advance

In the overall resource list on the Regional website, please look at:

[The Caretakers Calls to the Church](#) (PDF), especially pages 1-3, though you are encouraged to read all eleven pages if you can.

The six-minute video [Indigenous Peoples Speak to the Remit](#), bearing in mind that everything said here is in relation to self-determination **within** the United Church of Canada.

Part 1: Process for learn and reflect

You will need a flipchart or blackboard, or laptop and projector. Divide the space into two columns, one marked “detailed questions” and the other, “big picture questions”. Ask someone to write or type.

15 minutes: Read the Remit text together out loud.

What questions do you have? Write these down as you go, in the chat or on a shared screen, or on a flipchart. Put checkmarks next to questions others also have (one checkmark per person who has the same question). As you go, agree on whether the question goes under “detailed” or “big picture”.

Pay attention to your detailed questions, because sometimes these point to a bigger picture concern. If this is the case, agree together on the big-picture concern, and note that down too by drawing a line between the detailed question and the bigger picture it points to.

15 minutes: Watch the General Council video on frequently asked questions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5KbFs8BRMw>

Discussion part 1, in the spirit of courageous conversation:

15 minutes Now go over your questions again. Are any resolved? Have new ones surfaced?

Note them down on the flipchart. What uncertainties remain?

Note the checkmarks and on a new piece of paper or screen, note your top 3-5 questions.

Video 2: Two Canoes, with Chief Cadmus Delorme, Cowessess First Nation, Treaty Four.

[Click here](#) for the video and related article. The whole video isn’t that long, but you can watch from 9:35- 14:07 to get a sense of his point. If you can’t access the video easily, the full script is here. Scroll down (or use Ctrl + f) to find the phrase “We are all here today sharing because of treaty.”

Discussion part 2

15 minutes (or more): How does the understanding of two canoes travelling one river help frame the Remit conversation differently? Look at your top 3-5 questions from a Two Canoes point of view and see if that changes anything.

Are there assumptions or stereotypes about Indigenous people and communities that are surfacing in any of the questions? Remember that stereotypes are a reflection of the wider culture, and that naming them isn't about blaming ourselves as individuals. We can only know what we've been taught. Stretching beyond what we're been taught, and moving into new ways of relating to Indigenous nations and people, requires us to become aware of the beliefs we have that sit under the surface.

Close with prayer; and thank you for taking the time to really sit with questions raised by the Remit. These kinds of conversations are such an important part of truth and reconciliation commitments.

Questions to take away: [Samantha Miller](#), a member of the National Indigenous Council and of the Six Nations of the Grand River, asked this question at the National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering this July in Edmonton:

“What are the opportunities that arise when we say yes to this Remit?”

What do you feel might prevent you from supporting this Remit?

What helps you support it?

Another approach, from Regional Councils in southern Ontario ([click here for the full document](#)):

In deciding whether to vote yes or no, consider these questions:

- Will this remit move the church in a meaningful way toward decolonization?
- Will it create conditions for more just relationships?
- Will it move the church closer to our call as disciples of Jesus Christ, and as the church of Jesus Christ in this time and place?
- Is this what you believe the Spirit is calling the church to do at this time?

Part Two: Discuss part 2, and decide

At the beginning, review whether you have the paperwork and all the voting information you need. Confirm how you wish to hold your vote. Put your talking symbol back in circulation and go around the table or Zoom room.

Discussion: some possible questions

What do you feel might prevent you from supporting this Remit?

What helps you support it?

Do you feel ready to vote?

Then: **vote!** Remember that the results must be submitted through [the response form available here](#).