

Information for Potential Presbytery representatives to Toronto Conference Executive

The Commission on the Composition and Role of the Executive has prepared this document to provide an overview of the manner in which the Toronto Conference Executive will conduct the business of Toronto Conference between the regular meetings of the full Conference.

Composition of the Toronto Conference Executive

The Conference Executive will consist of 15 members:

president
president-elect or past-president
executive secretary
three representatives elected by each of the four Presbyteries

Terms of office:

president (two years, as approved at 2007 annual meeting)
president-elect or past-president (one year, as approved at the 2008 annual meeting)
executive secretary (while in office)

Presbytery representatives (three year terms, renewable once)

Eligibility for subsequent election: A Presbytery representative, having served a total of six years, is eligible to be elected again no earlier than one year following the expiration of the total term of six years.

Initial Presbytery representation:

In the initial period of implementation, the Presbyteries will be requested to elect a person for a one-year term, a second person for a two-year term, and a third person for a three-year term, with the hope that these individuals would continue for a second term if possible.

Balance:

Each Presbytery's representatives will include at least one lay person and one Ministry Personnel.

Meetings of the Toronto Conference Executive

The Toronto Conference Executive will operate within a policy governance model, which is a different method of doing the work of Christ in this Conference.

Each agenda will include time to...

- worship and listen to God
- build community, including listening to a variety of voices within the Conference, e.g. youth, retirees, aboriginal groups, Ministry Personnel
- learn about governance initially and to develop, monitor and regularly review all policies
- evaluate what we did well, what we accomplished, what we could have done better

In 2009-2010 meetings will start at 4:00 p.m., concluding by 9:00 p.m. on the second Wednesdays in September, November, February, April and June, rotating through the Conference and Presbytery offices. Meetings will not take place in Advent and Lent. If additional meetings are required, these will normally be held by conference call.

Policy Governance

The primary role of the Executive will be to develop and monitor policies which enable the Conference to live out its mission:

The mission of Toronto Conference is to strengthen congregations and mission units to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

To fulfill that mission, the Conference Executive will:

1. Make the best use of the human and financial resources available.
2. Ensure oversight and compliance within the polity of The United Church of Canada
3. Provide resources in the Presbyteries to promote the work in the following areas – program, property, personnel and public witness, with further support from the staff in the central Conference office.

Using a policy governance model will be a new way of doing the Conference's. The president and executive secretary will provide in-depth training on how policy governance will work within the Conference.

Initial policies will have been developed by the Commission on the Role of the Executive to help the new Executive begin its work. All policies will be reviewed by the Executive on a regular basis.

Presbytery representatives

The Presbytery representatives on the Executive will be elected from their Presbyteries, but will have the responsibility to focus on and act in the best interests of the whole of Toronto Conference.

Each Presbytery representative will come with particular skills and interests. The Executive will require a mix of people with the following skills and interest:

- openness to change and new ways of doing the work of Christ in the Conference;
- openness to the movement of the Spirit
- an ability to think about the big picture and be future oriented
- openness to a different understanding of the role of the Executive
- an ability to develop policies and monitor compliance with those policies
- an ability to differentiate between staff and governance roles
- an ability to work in a collaborative style
- be good communicators and listeners with the ability to report back to their electing Presbyteries
- be insightful thinkers
- have relative comfort with uncertainty and not having all the answers
- commitment to full and active participation in the Conference Executive.
- commitment to speaking with one voice regarding the policies and Decisions made by the Executive. Diverse points of view are important in discussion at the Executive, but when a decision has been made, everyone will speak with one voice.