



Indigenous Candidacy Board

Candidacy Boards provide an essential role in assisting people to discern their call into ministry.

Mandate

There are seven Candidacy Boards in the United Church, each relating to a number of regional councils or to the Indigenous Church. The candidacy boards are commissions of the Board of Vocation and have the responsibilities outlined in the Candidacy Pathway including naming candidates, terminating candidacy, and determining readiness for accreditation for ordination, commissioning to the diaconal ministry and recognizing designated lay ministers.

In response to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and in keeping with the Calls to the Church, the National Indigenous Council has sole responsibility for appointing an Indigenous Candidacy Board to serve the Indigenous Church.

Candidacy Board Membership

The Candidacy Board will have a minimum of six members who reflect the broad diversity of the United Church, with particular attention to its equity commitments and the presence of lay people and ministry personnel from each stream of ministry.

To honour the separation of responsibilities assigned to regional councils and those assigned to the Office of Vocation, Candidacy Board members will not be serving on a body of the regional council with decision-making responsibilities that relate to or affect pastoral relations or pastoral relationships. Members will reside in the geographical areas served by the Candidacy Board.

Member Skills and Experience

The National Indigenous Council is seeking members to serve on the Indigenous Candidacy Board, including graduates of the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre and its predecessors, Diaconal and Designated Lay Ministers, and lay people. We are seeking people with the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to carry out the responsibilities of the Board—i.e., in ministry formation and determining readiness for ministry leadership; in applying standards of practice; and in exercising wisdom, compassion, and fairness in decision-making.

Members of Candidacy Boards need to have skills in listening, discernment, having difficult conversations, and providing clear and concrete feedback. Members must be able to compassionately say “no,” including the possibility of terminating someone’s candidacy. Members will be comfortable viewing and working with documents online.

It is important for Candidacy Board members to understand that the Candidacy Pathway is different for each applicant and candidate; this takes extra time and attention. Members need knowledge of the realities of the practice of ministry and of intercultural sensitivity. Proficiency in French or other languages in addition to English is an asset.

Candidacy Board members will be members of the United Church active in a community of faith or ministry who are

- committed to the practice of ministry within The United Church of Canada
- predisposed to collaboration and teamwork
- able to listen and discern
- committed to right relations, the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and their relevance to ministry personnel, the vision of becoming an intercultural church, and the journey to becoming an anti-racist denomination
- comfortable with and able to participate in electronic meetings
- able to commit the time required for this responsibility

Ministry personnel need to be on the registry of accredited ministry personnel.

Expectations and Term

Candidacy Boards meet both in person and by video-conference to conduct interviews and board business. Some Candidacy Boards meet monthly; some meet every other month; some meet three to four times a year for a few days at a time. Serving on a Candidacy Board is a significant commitment requiring substantial time in meetings, interviews, and preparation. It is expected that members will make this commitment a priority and attend every meeting notwithstanding unavoidable emergencies or similar situations.

Candidacy Board members will be expected to read and be familiar with the following foundational documents for the United Church:

- United Church's [Statements of Faith](#)
- [Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership](#)
- [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [Calls to the Church](#)
- [Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice for Ministry Personnel](#)
- [Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church](#)
- [Working Towards Becoming an Anti-Racist Church](#) (commons.united-church.ca > What We Believe and Why > Anti-Racism)

Candidacy Board members will also be expected to attend the [Personal and Professional Boundaries for Church Leaders](#) workshop and the [Racial Justice Training](#) workshop (parts 1 and 2) if they have not already, as well as online gatherings for learning together up to three times a year.

Candidacy Boards are appointed as commissions of the Board of Vocation. Appointments to the Indigenous Candidacy Board are usually for approximately three years between meetings of the National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering, with the possibility of reappointment for a second term.

Equity Commitment

The United Church is committed to working toward the full participation of people with disabilities; youth and young adults; those who identify as Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+, Indigenous,

racialized, or francophone; people active in French ministries; those who speak a primary language other than English or French; and people from marginalized communities not named here. This is a part of the United Church's commitments to equity and self-determination, as well as eliminating barriers and working toward the full participation of all people.

It is a priority of the Board of Vocation to appoint people with these named identities and lived experiences to the work of all of its committees and boards.

About the Office of Vocation

The Office of Vocation is the body in the United Church that maintains the registry of accredited ministry personnel through setting standards for accreditation and assessing those who wish to serve as ministry personnel. It supports the processes for the discernment and training of ministry personnel, the determination of their fitness/readiness for accreditation, the fulfillment of continuing education standards, and the formal processes for oversight and discipline of ministry personnel.

To carry out its responsibilities, the Office consists of the Board of Vocation and several committees and commissions. [Learn more](#) about the Office of Vocation.