



# Working Group on Addressing Church Legacies for People of African Descent

## Key Points

*This Working Group will offer direction and advice on:*

- *developing an apology from the United Church to people of African descent for enslavement*
- *reflecting and acting upon current legacies of enslavement faced by Black people in Canada*
- *exploring creative ways of engaging with the United Nations Second International Decade for People of African Descent*

**Vacancies:** 4–6 members

**Key skills:** Lived experience and/or a background with anti-Black racism and broader questions of equity and justice. Good communication, animation, or analytical skills along with skills in interpersonal relations, group conflict resolution, and working in the midst of cultural diversity.

**Meeting expectations:** 1 in person during the 3-year term, 3–4 online annually.

## About this Appointed Member Opportunity

### Mandate

The Working Group on Addressing Church Legacies for People of African Descent will offer direction on ways that the church can engage with the United Nations Second International Decade for People of African Descent. They will also offer advice for the church on the process to develop an apology to people of African descent (Black people) in Canada for enslavement.

The Working Group on Addressing Church Legacies for People of African Descent will have responsibility for:

- engaging in appropriate consultations with groups in the church, and in the broader community, as part of the apology development process
- exploring processes and wording of past United Church apologies, as well as related apologies from other church denominations
- discerning and outlining the process for developing an apology from The United Church of Canada to people of African descent (Black people) for enslavement
- reflecting on and clearly naming the current legacies of enslavement faced by Black people in Canada
- naming potential responses to these legacies of enslavement from church and in society
- exploring and offering creative ways of engaging with the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent

- offering options for congregational education, reflection, and action on all of this work in ways that are consistent with the church's focus on [Toward 2035](#)

This is faithful work that will build on the church's commitments to anti-racism and reparations. This work of church legacies would be theologically grounded and could offer options for congregational education, reflection, and action in ways that are consistent with the church's focus on [Toward 2035](#).

This Working Group arises from the direction of the 45th General Council (Summer 2025):

- The [Apology from The United Church of Canada to the African Diaspora for Slavery](#)
- The commitment to engaging with the [United Nations Second International Decade for People of African Descent](#) (2025–2034).

The Working Group on Addressing Church Legacies for People of African Descent is accountable to the Executive of General Council (GCE) and will offer the Executive updates on its ongoing work.

### **Membership**

The Working Group on Addressing Church Legacies for People of African Descent will have an overall membership of 4–6 people (not including staff) appointed by the General Council Executive through the church's nominations process. The Anti-Racism and Equity Lead is the staff resource to the Working Group on Addressing Church Legacies for People of African Descent.

### **Member Skills and Experience**

We are seeking people who have experience with anti-racism work, intercultural engagement, or broader work of anti-oppression, whether through volunteering, employment, education, and/or lived experience. Members will have good communication, animation, or analytical skills and have strong skills in interpersonal relations, group conflict resolution, understandings of racial trauma, and working in the midst of cultural diversity. People of all racial identities are welcome to express interest.

**United Church Relationship:** Active participant

### **Expectations and Term**

- **Online meetings:** 3–4 times per year with additional meetings if needed
- **In-person meetings:** Once per term in late spring of 2026, Toronto
- **Expectations between meetings:** Moderate, but required, reading of materials before the meeting starts
- **Additional appointment possibilities or expectations:** None anticipated
- **Appointment term:** May 2026–August 2028 (46th General Council), with the possibility of reappointment for a second term of three years

Additional online meetings may be scheduled depending on the needs and work of the whole

group. Members are expected to attend meetings regularly. If members are not able to be at meetings, it is expected that they communicate this clearly and catch up on relevant missed work and conversation via the meeting minutes.

### **For all Elected and Appointed Member Roles**

The following expectations apply to all elected and appointed member roles for denominational committees and task groups.

Elected and appointed members will be:

- active in a community of faith or ministry
- committed to the calling of the United Church and willing to discern God's yearnings for this work
- 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, 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

Elected and appointed members agree to a [Behavioural Covenant](#) as a way of committing to mutual relationships, responsibilities, and accountabilities.

All boards and committees of the General Council play a role in living into the [Call and Vision](#) of the United Church in fulfilling their responsibilities. Boards and committees work in partnership with the General Council Office as it implements the objectives of the strategic plan.

### **Equity Commitment**

The United Church is committed to working toward the full participation of people with disabilities; youth and young adults; people who identify as Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+, Indigenous, racialized, or francophone; people active in French ministries; people 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 peoples. Individuals with these identities and lived experiences are encouraged to express interest.

To the extent possible, each committee or task group will reflect the broad diversity of the United Church, with particular attention to its equity commitments and the presence of both lay people and ministry personnel from across the geography of the church.

Visit our [opportunities page](#) for information on this and other opportunities.  
Use our [online nominations form](#) to nominate someone or express your own interest.  
**Deadline: Tuesday March 17, 2026**