

Policy of Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference
for the Election of 43rd General Council Commissioners
(revised November 2016)

Section 2. Conference 2.5 Electing Commissioners to General Council:

c. Method of Election: The Conference is responsible for deciding how to elect its commissioners.
The Manual (2016)

GENERAL

The membership of The United Church of Canada includes persons from varying backgrounds, circumstances and experience. In electing commissioners, Montreal & Ottawa Conference will honour the rich diversity of its members.

NUMBERS

Montreal & Ottawa Conference is entitled to send 25 commissioners*:

- Balance of Lay and Ordered Ministry (Manual requirement);
- Five (5) persons who are elected Commissioners by virtue of their office (Past-President, President, President-Elect, Lay Representative to General Council Executive, and Ordered Ministry Representative to General Council Executive);
- 16 Commissioner names are obtained from the four presbyteries, of which 8 positions are guaranteed, (one of two (2) Lay persons and one of two (2) Ordered Ministry personnel from each of the presbyteries);
- Three (3) persons under 30 years of age (as of July 1, 2018) at the time of General Council; one of these three persons will be associated with Ministries in French and endorsed by the Ministries in French organizations;
- Two (2) persons from la Table de concertation régionale du Synode Montreal et Ottawa; these positions are in addition to the position for the person under 30 years of age associated with Ministries in French; and
- Three (3) positions will be open for election on the floor of the Annual Meeting 2018.
- Four (4) positions making up remaining balance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF NOMINEES/COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners are elected to a three-year term including participation in the General Council, plus periodic meetings and consultations during the three following years, including twice-yearly meetings with the Conference Executive. They are also to make themselves available for reporting or discussion within the Conference, especially in their home presbytery.

As commissioners, nominees are expected to be familiar with and participate in the discussions of the Conference as it examines various issues. Accordingly, all nominees must attend the Montreal & Ottawa Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the one-day orientation event held in Lachine (normally in late June or early July). The Sub-Executive may grant a variance in the case of exceptional circumstances.

EX-OFFICIO COMMISSIONERS (5 positions)

Five persons are elected as commissioners by virtue of their office (Past-President, President, President-Elect, Lay representative to General Council Executive, and Ordered Ministry representative to General Council Executive). In situations where an individual may occupy two positions, the Sub-Executive will make a recommendation regarding a replacement.

PRESBYTERIES (1 Lay and 1 Order of Ministry from each presbytery – 8 positions)

Each of the four presbyteries will have at least two commissioners, one Order of Ministry and one lay person. The Conference Nominations Committee, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, will ask each of the four presbyteries to submit four (4) nominations, and at least one (1) of those nominations are to be a two (2) lay persons and two (2) ministry personnel. (Ordained, Diaconal & Designated Lay Ministers – The Manual 2016 By law E.1.1 (a) with accompanying biographical information by April 21, 2017 of the year of the General Meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor during the AGM with a deadline of 11:30 a.m. Saturday for such nominations. An election will be held during the AGM. The names of those not elected will be placed on a list of alternate commissioners in the order in which they placed during the election.

PERSONS UNDER 30 YEARS OF AGE (3 positions)

The Conference Nominations Committee, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, will ask for nominations from across the Conference for persons under 30 years of age at the time of the General Council, including persons associated with Ministries in French. Any Conference or presbytery body or presbyter is able to submit a nomination for these positions. The Conference Nominations Committee will take steps to encourage the nominations of persons under 30 years of age who are associated with Ministries in French. Nominations with accompanying biographical information are to be submitted by April 21, 2017 of the year of the General Meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor during the AGM with a deadline of 11:30 a.m. Saturday for such nominations. An election will be held during the AGM. The names of those not elected will be placed on a list of alternate commissioners in the order in which they placed during the election.

PERSONS FROM MINISTRIES IN FRENCH (2)

The Conference Nominations Committee, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, will ask for nominations from across the Conference for persons associated with Ministries in French. Any Conference or presbytery body or presbyter is able to submit a nomination for these positions. Any person associated with Ministries in French must have the endorsement of or a close connection to La Table M&O or a presbytery Ministries in French committee. Nominations with accompanying biographical information are to be submitted by April 21, 2017 of the year of the General Meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor during the AGM with a deadline of 11:30 a.m. Saturday for such nominations. An election will be held during the AGM. The names of those not elected will be placed on a list of alternate commissioners in the order in which they placed during the election.

COMMISSIONERS-AT-LARGE (3)

No later than two months prior to the AGM of the year in which General Council is held, the Conference Nominations Committee, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, will advise the presbyteries of the vacancies that exist in the list of commissioners. In addition, this communiqué will include information on the representative nature of the list of commissioners. Any Conference or presbytery body or presbyter is able to submit a nomination for these positions. Nominations with accompanying biographical information are to be submitted by April 2018 (specific date to be determined) of the year of the General Meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor during the AGM with a deadline of 11:30 a.m. Saturday for such nominations. An election will be held during the AGM. The names of those not elected will be placed on a list of alternate commissioners in the order in which they placed during the election.

REMAINING BALANCE (4)

The Conference Nominations will attempt to achieve balance (e.g. gender, urban/rural, age, experience, and varieties of ministry personnel) within the slate of twenty-five persons using the remaining nominations. Every effort will be made to send commissioners from within the boundaries of all Presbyteries; but Commissioners represent the Conference and are available to report to any Presbytery.

PROCESS

A nomination must include the name of the nominee, of the person making the nomination, and of the person seconding the nomination plus a short biography (250 words). The deadline for the submission of nominations by presbyteries and all other bodies named in this policy is April 21, 2017 of the year of the General Meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor during the AGM, defined as no later than 11:30 a.m. Saturday.

The list of nominees and their biographies that have been received will be circulated in the language of submission by email to all presbyteries no later than April 21, 2017 of the year of the General Meeting. Paper copies will be available at the registration desk of the AGM. Following the closure of nominations from the floor, photocopies of the nominations will be available at the registration desk. The Conference Nominations Committee will arrange for a way to indicate nominees such as a special designation on their nametags or other marking (hat, scarf or stole). There will be no oral presentations or nomination speeches at the AGM.

The Conference Nominations Committee, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, will oversee the election process, including the submission of nominations, the publication of the names of nominees and their biographies, the election and the designation of alternate commissioners.

The AGM Planning Committee will recruit a Chief Scrutineer and a minimum of 8 scrutineers with at least one scrutineer from each presbytery to handle the technical aspects of the voting process (distribution and counting of ballots). The Chair of the Conference Nominations Committee will be present during the counting of ballots.

Four lists, in priority order, of alternate commissioners to General Council will be created by the Conference Nominations Committee – one ministry personnel, one lay, one youth and young adult and one Ministries in French. If alternates are needed, they will be taken in order from the appropriate list.

The Conference Nominations Committee will have a monitoring role and after each election will report to the Conference Executive within six months about underrepresented groups. This report may include proposed steps to encourage greater diversity.

ALTERNATE COMMISSIONERS

The Conference Nominations Committee, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, will maintain lists of alternate commissioners. If alternates are needed, they will be taken in order of priority from the appropriate list. In any other circumstances not described in this policy, the Sub-Executive will make a decision regarding the nomination to fill a vacancy.

* Effective December 20th 2016 by notice from the General Council office