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# Election of General Council Commissioners

## BC Conference General Meeting 2018

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### Background

One of the responsibilities of the Conference General Meeting is to elect Commissioners to the General Council. An election for Commissioners to the 43rd General Council will be held at our General Meeting May 31-June 3, 2018 in Penticton, BC. The meeting of the General Council will be July 21-27, 2018 in Oshawa, Ontario.

In 2018 BC Conference can elect 22 Commissioners. In addition, the Conference President-Elect and the two General Council Executive members from BC will also automatically become Commissioners (Basis of Union 8.3.1; 8.3.2).

The rules of the United Church stipulate that there will be an equal number of Order of Ministry (and Designated Lay Ministers) and lay members elected as Commissioners (for more information, see *The Manual E.1.1 a*).

BC Conference, as well as many other Conferences, also has additional criteria for the election of Commissioners. The BC Conference Executive decided in 2007 that:

- *each Presbytery will have at least one Commissioner to General Council;*
- *at least 10% of our Commissioners be Youth and Young Adult (under 30 years old);*
- *at least one Commissioner be from a visible minority, preferably from an ethnic minority congregation; and*
- *at least one Commissioner be from First Nations.*

In addition, some Commissioners have traditionally been chosen by virtue of their office (Conference President and any nominees for Moderator).

For the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council, Conferences have also been asked to honour a preferential nomination that will come from a national gathering of youth in February 2018. This will be a BC Conference youth who will spend significant time in the summer of 2018 with others from across the country before attending Youth Forum at the General Council meeting and, of course, serving as a Commissioner.

In order to achieve a group of Commissioners who reflect all of these values and commitments, the following process has been established.

### Election Process

1. Presbyteries nominate four people each as General Council Commissioners.
  - a. The nominees will be two Order of Ministry and two lay people (please check *The Manual E.1.1 a*).
  - b. If possible, at least one of these nominees will be a youth or young adult (under 30 years at the time of the General Council meeting).
  - c. If possible, at least one nominee will be from a visible minority, preferably an ethnic minority congregation, or be First Nations.
  - d. Presbytery nominations are sent to the BC Conference office before April 30, 2018.

2. The names of the nominee and alternate from the Youth Forum Winter Gathering will be automatically treated as nominations.
3. Additional nominations will be received from the floor of the General Meeting.
  - a. Each nomination must be supported by at least five Conference delegates.
  - b. A deadline will be set at the meeting to receive nominations.
4. A poll shall be taken to determine preferred nominees.
  - a. The names of each nominee shall be placed on a secret ballot.
  - b. Each Conference member will select up to ten preferred nominees.
  - c. The results of the poll shall be tabulated for reference by the “elders.”
5. A group of “elders” (the four most recent former Presidents of BC Conference attending the General Meeting) will review all the nominations and the results of the poll. They will then prepare and present a list to the General Meeting for consideration and election as Commissioners.
  - a. The list of nominees will honour all legal requirements named in *The Manual*.
  - b. The list of nominees will reflect the values and commitments named by the Conference Executive.
  - c. The list of nominees will include the names of persons to be elected as Commissioners by virtue of their office and by the Youth Forum.
  - d. The list of nominees will reflect, as far as possible while honouring the other values and commitments named by the Conference Executive, the results of the poll of Conference members.
  - e. The list will also name Alternate Commissioners: two Order of Ministry and two Lay Representatives (*The Manual D.2.5.5 d*) and one Youth Forum member.
6. In order to ensure that each Presbytery or named constituency has at least one Commissioner attending the General Council, the President shall be empowered to name an alternate Commissioner from the list of nominees (not necessarily one of the named Alternates) in a situation where an elected Commissioner has had to withdraw, leaving no one from their Presbytery or named constituency as a Commissioner.