

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND GOALS FOR A CONFERENCE WITHIN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

Through scripture and experience, we know that the Church of Jesus Christ is a body. For any body to function, there must be linkages between the various parts; for the United Church these linkages are conciliar in nature. As a court of the Church, Conference performs three essential functions:

- (a) the episcopal function of exercising care and oversight of the smaller units of the Church, specifically Presbyteries, and through a variety of resources and services, pastoral charges and other local mission units;
- (b) the representational function of participating in the larger parts of the Church and relating to bodies outside the Church such as governments, health and welfare systems and organizations seeking justice;
- (c) the administrative function of providing specific working links for ministry and service between the larger and smaller parts of the body.

Each of the thirteen Conferences develops its own set of goals and priorities within the framework provided by the General Council, but there are at least four goals common to all Conferences:

- (1) to have oversight of the religious life of the Church within its bounds and adopt measures to promote shalom;
- (2) to deal with all matters submitted by Presbyteries which affect the status, faith, and character of ministers and candidates for the order of ministry;
- (3) to appoint, settle or permit members of the order of ministry to exercise appropriate ministries within the Church or outside the Church;
- (4) to deal with matters referred to it by the General Council.