

DIAKONIA of The United Church of Canada (DUCC)

STATEMENT OF VISION

God calls us to diaconal ministry.
The gospel of Jesus invites all to this ministry:
to offer compassion and accompaniment,
to work for liberation and justice,
to act as advocates of creative transformation.
Diaconal ministry, as a recognized order, is rooted
within our faith tradition and history,
and it is continued and embodied
in an ecumenical, world-wide community.
This vocation is a journey
involving Spirit-filled enrichment and learning,
requiring humble offering of self,
demanding prayerful discernment and courageous risking,
exercising visionary and communal leadership,
promising joy and meaning,
and daring to imagine God's abundance
in a world of love and respect.
Through education, service, social justice, and pastoral care,
diaconal ministry in The United Church of Canada,
encourages a growing faith,
speaks truth to power,
seeks mutual empowerment,
proclaims prophetic hope,
nurtures life-giving community,
fosters peaceful, right relationship,
within the church and the whole of creation
wherever the Spirit may lead.

Adopted at DUCC National Gathering, April 2009.

Mission

Diakonia of the United Church of Canada will seek to :

- Strengthen diaconal ministry with in The United Church of Canada
- Support individuals and groups committed to diaconal ministry.
- Affirm daconal heritage and history.
- Foster better understanding of this vital dimension of Christian ministry.

BYLAWS of DIAKONIA of The United Church of Canada (DUCC)

ARTICLE I

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of DUCC is to create and maintain community and connection among its members in order to:

1. Build up the body of Christ through strengthening diaconal ministries and those in diaconal ministry in the United Church.
- 1.2 Share information of interest with members and to others who are interested in diaconal ministry.
3. Reflect on issues related to diaconal ministry within the United Church,
4. Advocate for Diaconal Ministry in the courts of the United Church, particularly the General Council and its Committees and Task Groups.
5. Further theological reflection on diaconal ministry in the context of the changing face of the Christian church in our times.
6. Maintain membership in and appoint representatives to DIAKONIA World Federation and DIAKONIA of the Americas and the Caribbean (DOTAC) and their committees.
7. Promote interest and involvement in the international and ecumenical diakonia
8. Encourage reflection, learning, and action on local, national and international issues related to diaconal ministry.

ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Membership

- 2.1.1 All commissioned Diaconal Ministers (active or retired) are considered members of DUCC.
- 2.1.2 Membership in DUCC is also open to those who are:
 - 2.1.2.1 students in diaconal ministry preparation programs
 - 2.1.2.2 others associated with the United Church who identify themselves as being in diaconal ministry. They need to apply for membership through the DUCC Treasurer. Criteria for acceptance will be determined by the Coordinating Committee.
- 2.3 Associate membership is open to interested ecumenical colleagues who apply to the CoOrdinating Committee. Criteria for acceptance will be determined by the Coordinating Committee.
- 2.4 There is no membership fee for DUCC. Expenses of DUCC are borne by members' donations. These contributions are a tangible way to support the work of the association and it's committees.
 - 2.4.1.1 The amount of support is flewxible and optional.
 - 2.4.1.2 All donations are tax deductible.

2.2 Donations -- Expenses of DUCC are borne by members' donations. These contributions are a tangible way to support the work of the association and its committees.

2.2.1 The amount of support is flexible depending on the member's ability to pay.

2.2.2 Suggested annual contribution rates are set by the Coordinating Committee in consultation with the Treasurer.

2.2.3 All donations (more than a minimum established annually by the Treasurer and Coordinating Committee) are tax deductible.

ARTICLE III NATIONAL GATHERING

National DUCC Gatherings are meetings of members for the purposes of conducting business before the membership, and for sharing, learning, worship, celebration and inspiration.

3.1 Frequency – Typically, the National Gathering will be held every two years, in a location decided by the Coordinating Committee.

3.2 Planning Team – A planning team will be recruited by the Coordinating Committee to oversee the event. The team shall consult and be accountable to the Coordinating Committee.

3.2.1 A Coordinator(s) of the event will be named.

3.2.2 A Registrar(s) will be recruited.

3.2.3 A budget will be established, including registration costs.

3.2.4 Other leadership necessary for the event will be recruited.

3.2.5 A theme will be chosen for the event.

3.3 Local Arrangements – A local arrangements team, of diaconal ministers who live and work in proximity to the location of the event, will be established to:

3.3.1 Find a Venue for the meeting

3.3.2 Ensure Accommodation options are available

3.3.3 Manage any Transportation needs

3.3.4 Provide Hospitality and Social Events

3.3.5 Communicate costs to the Program Planning Team for the purpose of setting the registration fee and budget.

3.3.6 Arrange for meals at the venue.

3.3.7 Provide suggestions for local visits, if the program planners want to include those in the agenda.

3.4 Schedule – Typically, the National Gathering will include the following elements:

3.4.1 Business – The Coordinating Committee will organize this portion of the National Gathering. Decisions are normally made by consensus. If a vote is required a simple majority is required for the motion to pass.

The business before the members shall include:

3.4.1.1 A Coordinating Committee accountability report

3.4.1.2 Any issues from General Council, the Regions, or the international and ecumenical DIAKONIA that are deemed appropriate for wider conversation

3.4.1.3 A budget and financial accounting

3.4.1.4 A nominations report

3.4.1.5 Reports from Committees

3.4.1.6 Reports from the Regional Groups

3.4.1.7 Reports from the Barbara Elliot Trust Fund for Innovative Ministries and the Kaufman Renewal and Emergency Fund

3.4.1.8 Reports from DOTAC (DIAKONIA of the Americas and the Caribbean) and DWF (DIAKONIA World Federation)

- 3.3.1.9 Report of the DUCC Staff
- 3.3.1.10 Reports from the Theological Schools that offer preparation for Diaconal Ministry

3.4.2 **Program** – The Planning Team establishes a theme for the event in consultation with the Coordinating Committee. They will oversee and arrange leadership for:

- 3.4.2.1 Orientation and Community Building – Sharing any history and providing welcome for everyone especially new comers.
- 3.4.2.2 Worship and Music – Any aspects of spiritual practice.
- 3.4.2.3 Theme – Any speakers, reflective programming, workshops, site visits, bible studies as are deemed suitable.
- 3.4.2.4 Memorials and Celebrations – Recognition of deceased members and of milestones for members (i.e. anniversaries of commissioning, retirement, graduations)

ARTICLE IV ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The work of DUCC will be distributed over a number of standing committees.

4.1 Coordinating Committee -- The business and affairs of DUCC shall be managed and overseen by a Coordinating Committee, which shall exercise in the name of and on behalf of DUCC all of the rights and privileges legally exercisable as a corporate entity, except as otherwise may be provided by law, the Charter and these Bylaws. Normally, business of DUCC will be done through consensus decision-making processes.

4.1.1 Membership -- The members of the Coordinating Committee shall include:

- 4.1.1.1 A Chair
- 4.1.1.2 A Treasurer
- 4.1.1.3 A Secretary
- 4.1.1.4 Representative to DOTAC
- 4.1.1.5 A representative of the Nominating Committee
- 4.1.1.6 A representative of the Communications Committee
- 4.1.1.7 At least two Members at Large
- 4.1.1.8 The DUCC Staff person as an *ex officio* member

4.1.2 Terms – Members will serve for two year terms (normally from one biennial National Gathering to the next). Terms may be renewable three times.

4.1.3 Duties and Responsibilities -- The Coordinating Committee shall:

- 4.1.3.1 See that decisions from the National Gathering are carried out.
- 4.1.3.2 Monitor the implementation of policies/plans determined by the membership of DUCC.
- 4.1.3.3 Keep financial records and establish budgets.
- 4.1.3.4 Receive gifts or bequest offered for DUCC and administer them in accordance with the Charter, Purposes and Bylaws of the organization.
- 4.1.3.5 Keep minutes and records.
- 4.1.3.6 Communicate with membership.
- 4.1.3.7 Oversee plans for the National Gathering.
- 4.1.3.8 Facilitate the sharing of information and resources for counselling, support and spiritual growth.
- 4.1.3.9 Respond to concerns raised by members and committees.
- 4.1.3.10 Support regional groups.
- 4.1.3.11 Advocate for diaconal ministry in the United Church of Canada.
- 4.1.3.12 Encourage reflection and study of the theology of diakonia.
- 4.1.3.13 Encourage DUCC members to participate on various larger church

bodies and governance structures.

4.1.3.14 Maintain international and ecumenical connections through DOTAC (DIAKONIA of the Americas and the Caribbean) and DWF (DIAKONIA World Federation), and naming DUCC representatives and delegates to these organizations and assemblies.

4.1.3.15 Receive any resignations for members of any DUCC Committees and inform the Nominations Committee.

4.1.3.16 Name task groups or committees to address emerging matters for the organization.

4.1.4 Officers

4.1.4.1 The length of term for the following positions shall be four year and renewable once for total length of eight years.

4.1.4.2. These positions are elected by and accountable to the CoOrdinating Committee.

4.1.4.2.1 Chair shall:

4.1.4.2.1.1 Preside at and prepare the agendas for, meetings of the CoOrdinating Committee.

4.1.4.2.1.2 Preside at, and oversee the agenda for, the business sections of the National Gatherings.

4.1.4.2.1.3 Share with the Secretary responsibilities for correspondence.

4.1.4.2.1.4 Act as liaison to the planning team for the National Gathering.

4.1.4.2.1.5 Delegate responsibilities to other member of the CoOrdinating Committee.

4.1.4.2.1.6 Be the official spokesperson for the organization.

4.1.4.2.1.7 Act as an authorized signatory, with the Secretary or Treasurer, for DUCC

4.1.4.2.2 Secretary shall:

4.1.4.2.2.1 Keep and circulate, the minutes of the Coordinating Committee and National Gatherings.

4.1.4.2.2.2 Keep records for DUCC

4.1.4.2.2.3 Share with the Chair of the Coordinating Committee responsibilities for correspondence.

4.1.4.2.3 Treasurer shall :

4.1.4.2.3.1 Serve as financial officer of DUCC

4.1.4.2.3.2 Be responsible for handling all income and expenditures.

4.1.4.2.3.3 Be responsible for monitoring financial policies.

4.1.4.2.3.4 Provide quarterly financial reports to the Coordinating Committee and reports to the National Gathering.

4.1.4.2.3.5 Provide annual tax receipts to donors.

4.1.4.2.3.6 Prepare an annual budget.

4.1.4.2.3.7 Provide year end statements (Fiscal year begins January 1 ends December 31)

4.1.4.2.3.8. Annually, arrange for a financial review or audit in consultation with the Coordinating Committee.

4.1.4.2.3.9 Prepare the annual charitable filing for the Canada Revenue Agency

4.1.4.2.3.10 Perform all of the duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to them by the President or Board of Directors. (Shouldn't this be **Chair or Coordinating Committee?**)

4.1.5 Staff Person

- 4.1.5.1 The Coordinating Committee may hire a staff person to assist in carrying out its responsibilities as the Coordinating Committee directs.
- 4.1.5.2 The staff person shall receive remuneration and shall be on contract with on fixed end date, but shall have an annual performance review based upon the job description.

4.2 **Nominations Committee** -- A Nominating Committee will recruit, orient, support and thank volunteer members of DUCC and representatives of DUCC on other bodies.

4.2.1 **Membership** --The Biennial Gathering elects between 3 and 5 people to the Nominating Committee to serve a term of four years (renewable once).

4.2.2 **Accountability** -- The Committee be accountable to the DUCC Community through the Coordinating Committee. The Nominating Committee will be represented on the Coordinating Committee by a representative selected by the Nominating Committee.

3. **Duties and Responsibilities** – The Nominating Committee shall:

- 3.1. Meet at least once a year to assess vacancies within the DUCC structure.
- 3.2. Recruit DUCC members to serve on Committees as directed by the Coordinating Committee.
 - 3.2.1. Aim for a rich diversity in representation on committees.
 - 3.2.2. Stay mindful of succession planning needs for the organization.
- 3.3. Maintain an inventory listing skill sets required for committees and representation.
- 3.4. Maintain a gifts, skills and interests inventory of DUCC members interested in serving the organization.
- 4.2.3.5 Develop orientation materials for the organization and committee and share them with members recruited to serve in these positions.
6. Offer support as appropriate to and/or as requested by volunteers serving.
7. Develop opportunities and mechanisms to thank volunteers who have served.
8. Keep minutes and records.
9. Report to the Coordinating Committee and at the National Gathering.
10. Submit any budget considerations to the Treasurer for the annual budget process.

3. **Communications** – The Communications Committee will coordinate the communication of items of interest and importance to DUCC in order to enhance relationships and information sharing within the DUCC community.

1. **Membership** – The Biennial Gathering elects between 3 and 5 people to the Communication Committee to serve a term of four years (renewable once). Membership on the Committee shall include:

1. Chair
2. Editor of DUCC Enews
3. DUCC Website Minder
4. DUCC Database Minder
5. Administrator of DUCC Social Media

4.3.1.6 Members at Large

4.3.2 **Accountability** - The Committee be accountable to the DUCC Community through the Coordinating Committee. The Communications Committee will be represented on the Coordinating Committee by a representative selected by the Communications Committee.

4.3.3 Duties and Responsibilities – The Communications Committee shall:

- 4.3.3.1. Meet regularly to discuss matters of policy and oversight of DUCC’s communication efforts.
2. Oversee the work and policies related to the:
 - 2.1. DUCC E-news
 - 2.2. DUCC Website
 - 2.3. DUCC Database
 - 4.3.3.2.4 DUCC Social Media
 - 2.4. Any other communication initiatives that emerge.
3. Keep minutes and records.
4. Report regularly to the Coordinating Committee and at the National Gathering.
5. Submit any budget considerations to the Treasurer for the annual budget process.

4. **Advocacy Committee** –The Advocacy Committee will represent the DUCC community with the structures of the larger church and will monitor and assess policies and issues that impact Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada.

- 4.1. **Membership** -- The Nominating Committee will recruit and maintain a roster of five to six persons to serve on the Advocacy Committee.
 - 4.1.1. Members will serve a term of four years (renewable once).
 - 4.1.2. The DUCC Staff person will be an *ex officio* member of this committee.
- 4.2. **Accountability**—The Committee be accountable to the DUCC Community through the Coordinating Committee. The Advocacy Committee will regularly be represented on the Coordinating Committee by the Staff Person. Advocacy Committee members may attend Coordinating Committee meetings at anytime upon request of the Coordinating Committee Chair.
- 4.3. **Duties and Responsibilities** – The Advocacy Committee shall:
 - 4.3.1. Liaise with persons in the General Council and Regional Offices who have responsibilities that affect Diaconal Ministry.
 - 4.3.2. Monitor and evaluate policies and structures that impact the understanding and practice of Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada.
 - 4.3.3. Liaise with staff in the theological schools that provide preparation for Diaconal Ministry.
 - 4.3.4. Monitor and evaluate programs of Diaconal Formation in the theological schools that provide preparation for Diaconal Ministry.
 - 4.3.5. Consult with the DUCC community about concerns and issues related to Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada.
 - 4.3.6. Promote awareness of Diaconal Ministry in the Church.
 - 4.3.7. Keep minutes and records.
 - 4.3.8. Report regularly to the Coordinating Committee and at the National Gathering.
 - 4.3.9. Submit any budget considerations to the Treasurer for the annual budget process.
 - 4.3.10.

5. **Archives Committee** -

- 5.1. **Membership** The Nominating Committee will recruit and maintain a roster of two to four persons to serve on the Archives Committee.
 - 5.1.1. Members will serve a term of four years (renewable once).
 - 5.1.2. The DUCC Staff person will be an *ex officio* member of this committee.
 - 5.2. **Accountability** -- The Committee be accountable to the DUCC Community through the Coordinating Committee. The Archives Committee will report as needed, and at least annually to DUCC's Coordinating Committee.
 - 5.3. **Duties and Responsibilities** – The Archives Committee shall:
 - 5.3.1. Oversee DUCC's records, historical documents and artifacts and ensuring that they are properly retained and accessible for member and public access.
 - 5.3.2. Be informed about the various places where DUCC's records are stored and share that knowledge with the DUCC community.
 - 5.3.3. Develop and maintain a process of collecting DUCC's records and depositing them with The United Church of Canada's Archives on a regular and timely basis.
 - 5.3.4. Be the primary contact with the United Church of Canada's archivist who manages the DUCC collection and other regional United Church archivists who maintain some DUCC records.
 - 5.3.5. Encourage DUCC members to retain their own papers and records and submit them to the United Church archives so that there is a robust representation of diaconal ministry in the historic record.
 - 5.3.6. Educate DUCC members and the UCC regarding the history of DUCC
 - 5.3.7. Assist those who research, write or present DUCC's history and to be a resource in ensuring that the representation of DUCC and UCC Diaconal Ministers is historically accurate and respectful.
 - 5.3.8. Keep minutes and records.
 - 5.3.9. Report regularly to the Coordinating Committee and at the National Gathering.
 - 5.3.10. Submit any budget considerations to the Treasurer for the annual budget process.
6. **Regional Clusters** – A network of contacts for each region will share information, support and build community amongst the regions' DUCCs.
- 6.1. **Membership** – The Nominations Committee will seek a person to serve as contact from each of the Regions in The United Church of Canada
 - 6.1.1. Members will serve a term of four years (renewable once).
 - 6.1.2. The DUCC Staff person will be the primary communication with the regional contacts.
 - 6.2. **Accountability** -- The Regional Contacts are an informal network. The contacts will be accountable to the DUCCs in their Region and will liaise with the DUCC Staff and the Coordinating Committee as necessary.
 - 6.3. **Duties and Responsibilities** – The network of Regional Contacts shall:
 - 6.3.1. Support individual Diaconal Ministers and offer a place of connection.
 - 6.3.2. Help to strengthen diaconal identity in their region.
 - 6.3.3. Share information about DUCC , DIAKONIA and diaconal programming and events.
 - 6.3.4. Provide forums for the Coordination Committee to consult with DUCCs
 - 6.3.5. Support any DUCC Regional Group who may take on a working role, if they choose.

ARTICLE 5 REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 Representation to DOTAC (DIAKONIA of the Americas and the Caribbean)

5.1.1 **Membership** – The Representative, and an Alternate, to DOTAC are chosen at the National Gathering, two years before the term begins.

5.1.1.1 Term is usually eight years (the period between two World DIAKONIA assemblies).

5.1.1.2 The incoming representative is mentored, by the incumbent representative, for one year prior to the beginning of their term.

5.1.2 **Accountability** – The DOTAC Representative shall be a Member of the Coordinating Committee and shall share regular reports there and to National Gatherings.

3. **Duties and Responsibilities** – The DOTAC Representative shall:

5.1.3.1 Attend and participate in DOTAC Board of Director meetings.

2. Liaise with the alternate DUCC representative to DOTAC, keeping the alternate informed of DOTAC matters.

3. Attend DUCC National Gatherings and share a report on DOTAC and World DIAKONIA events and business.

4. Provide reports to the DUCC Coordinating Committee.

5. Write reports for the DOTAC Board of Directors about the work of DUCC and Diaconal activity and concerns that arise in The United Church of Canada.

6. Be prepared to take on leadership in worship, and business matters for DOTAC and DIAKONIA World Federation (DWF).

7. Arrange to have DOTAC and DWF information shared via DUCC communication channels.

8. Ensure DOTAC and World DIAKONIA Fees are paid annually.

2. **Representatives Barb Elliot Trust Fund for Innovative Ministries** – The BEFIM was established to support innovative and/or non-traditional Canadian ministries that reflect Barb Elliott’s commitment to the ministry of diakonia, and, that find it difficult to secure regular funding.

1. **Membership** - The Nominating Committee will recruit and maintain a roster of three to four persons to serve on the Committee that administers the Fund.

2. **Accountability** – The Representatives report to the Coordinating Committee at least annually and to the National Gatherings.

5.2.3 **Duties and Responsibilities** – The Representatives shall:

5.2.3.1 Attend and participate in meetings of the Fund Committee.

2.1.2. Promote the Fund in the DUCC community.

2.1.3. Receive and review grant applications.

2.1.4. Communicate decisions to all applicants.

2.1.5. Receive reports from successful applicants

2.1.6. Report to the DUCC community about decisions of the committee.

2.1.7. Keep records and minutes.

3. **Representatives Kaufman Renewal and Emergency Fund** – The purpose of the KREF is to help with the cost of retreat, reflection, renewal and rest experiences, and to make possible a grant or loan to persons who find themselves in a financial emergency.

1. **Membership** - The Nominating Committee will recruit and maintain a roster of three to four persons to serve on the Committee that administers the Fund.

2. **Accountability** – The Representatives report to the Coordinating Committee at least annually and to the National Gatherings.

5.3.3 **Duties and Responsibilities** – The Representatives shall:

- 5.2.3.1 Attend and participate in meetings of the Fund Committee.
- 2.2. Promote the Fund in the DUCC community.
- 2.3. Receive and review grant applications.
- 2.4. Communicate decisions to all applicants.
- 2.5. Receive reports from successful applicants
- 2.6. Report to the DUCC community about decisions of the committee.
- 2.7. Keep records and minutes.

ARTICLE 6 GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

DUCC will be governed according to the following principles and practices:

- 6.1 The organization will use consensus process for decision-making. The most recent version of the process is appended to this set of bylaws.
- 6.2 Quorum at National Gatherings will be 5% the membership. Associate members and guests are not counted for quorum.
- 6.3 Meetings of the National Gathering and Committees may be held in person, by video or telephone conference or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear one another. Proxies will not be permitted.
- 6.4 At the National Gathering or Committees, whether in person or some means, proxies will not be permitted.
- 6.5 Quorum of Committees will be 50 per cent of the membership.
- 6.6 Notice of National Gatherings will be shared in all of the communication media at least one month prior to the gathering.
- 6.7 Urgent decisions that is required by the Coordinating Committee or Committees , may be made by an exchange of emails. These decisions will be recorded in the official minutes.
- 6.8 Members of Committees and at the National Gatherings are to declare any conflicts of interest that would include financial or positional advantage or adversity. These conflicts are to be recorded in the minutes. Members are to remove themselves from the discussion and decision-making.
- 6.9 Amendments to the Charter or Bylaws need to be approved by the National Gathering.
- 6.10 Dissolution of the organization will need to be approved at the National Gathering and decisions about distribution of any assets of DUCC will need to be identified at that time.

APPENDUM A

Charter

“To strengthen the diaconal ministry within The United Church of Canada, we the undersigned covenant with each other in founding the DIAKONIA of The United Church of Canada on this the seventeenth day of June in the year one thousand, nine hundred and eighty-four. We commit ourselves to support this association as it participates in affirming our diaconal heritage, fostering a better understanding of the vital dimension of Christian Ministry and support for those individuals and groups committed to Diakonia. This association shall be guided by the principles and responsibilities which have been accepted on this same date, and by those on which we agree in the future. With faith in God we renew our commitment to diaconal ministry.” June 17th, 1984.

APPENDUM B : Model of Decision Making by Consensus

- 1. The topic for decision is introduced with background and a clearly articulated motion.**
- 2. Chair would ask for clarifying questions.**
- 3. Engage in plenary discussion of the motion.**
- 4. Chair would check for consensus**
 - A Are there any who disagree?**
 - i If there are no one then the motion passes**
 - ii if there are some who disagree then those people are given an opportunity to speak.**
 - b. Take a “straw vote” – non binding using the categories**
 - i Yes**
 - ii No**
 - iii Undecided**
 - iv Abstain**
 - c. Those undecided are allowed to ask questions which might allow them to decide.**
 - d. If there are no votes against or undecided then an immediate formal vote is taken on the motion.**
- 5. If there is no consensus there would follow discussion on how critical is it that a decision be made and whether it is wise to defer.**
- 6. If it is agreed that a decision needs to be made, a vote is taken which must have a 2/3 majority of the eligible to vote to carry the motion.**
- 7. Whether the vote is carried or defeated, there would be time for small groups to discuss the implications the vote has on us as individuals or as a group.**