

## REGIONAL COUNCIL: REGIONAL COUNCIL RELATIONSHIP WITH LA TABLE DES MINISTÈRES EN FRANÇAIS

This policy is the covenant between La Table des ministères en français and Shining Waters Regional Council.

Date Approved: February 6, 2019	Review date by the executive: 2020
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The original signed copy of the Covenant is available at the General Council Office, La Table des ministères en français, and the offices of Shining Water

### Covenant

General Secretary, *La Table des ministères en français* and the *Shining Waters Regional Council*

This tri-partite covenant is intended to assist the parties in working together to strengthen ministries in French, bilingual ministries and to seize the opportunity to grow our presence amongst Francophones across the territory of the *Shining Waters Regional Council*.

We collectively understand the importance of Francophone identity in cultural and linguistic terms and seek to find ways to ensure their self-determination within a collaborative framework. Ministries in French provide a new way to engage with an untapped potential in Shining Waters. This engagement is particularly useful in the intercultural context of Toronto where a growing number of Francophone migrants are settling.

The current restructuring of The United Church of Canada is a key moment for us to avoid doing things the way we've always done, but it is also important to ensure that we do not undervalue the importance of the Francophone voice within the church along with its cultural understanding of its context. It is also key that none of this work happens in isolation and that we seek new venues for collaboration.

This covenant intends to help the church honour these approaches for existing ministries and those that are being developed in the future.

The involvement of the General Secretary, through staff in the Ministries in French cluster and the Office of Vocation will provide support to ensure that we meet our common goals in this work. La Table and its nation-wide network of Francophone and bilingual ministry personnel and laity will engage as the voice and actions of this work. The Regional Council will provide structure and local context in a manner consistent with the rest of its ministry in the region.

#### Existing Ministries

When it comes to recognizing existing ministries in French, the recognition will be done by both the Regional Council and La Table.

The following communities of faith within Shining Waters have been formally recognized by La Table as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019:

Ministère Protestant Francophone de Toronto

When Pastoral Relations issues are raised in a recognized ministry in French (section I of the Manual), La Table will work with the appropriate entity of the Regional Council to ensure that these matters are handled jointly. La Table's membership may be called upon and used in conjunction with the Regional Council's process in support of this work for ministries in French as appropriate.

If a community of faith who identifies as francophone is undergoing a review according to the Regional Council's established process under section 6.3.3.1 of the Manual, the Regional Council will populate the committee with membership from La Table in the region where the process is taking place. This is intended to ensure both the ability to communicate with the community and a cultural sensitivity to handle issues that arise within that context. La Table may waive this requirement should circumstances make this composition impossible.

The decision to end an established ministry in French or the decision to assume control of the community of faith under section 6.3.3.7 of the Manual will require approval of both La Table and the Regional Council. In the interests of those who have contributed to ministries in French over the years, when issues of property or finances related to a ministry in French arise (section 6.3.5.2), La Table will make final decisions about the disposition of such property, in consultation with the Regional Council.

### **New Ministries**

The General Council, Regional Council and La Table will work actively and collaboratively to create new ministries, develop communities of faith, and build innovative ministries together. All will contribute financial and human resources towards this objective.

When a new community of faith that is predominantly Francophone is ready for recognition as a going concern, recognition of this ministry will be done by approval of both La Table and the Regional Council in a dual recognition process. Should either body refuse to recognize the new ministry, it will remain an unrecognized community of faith until such time as both parties are prepared to proceed to recognition. Reasons for any refusal of such a request for recognition by a community of faith must be made clear to that community and to all the parties of this covenant so that suitable measures may be taken to address the outstanding issues.

### **Candidacy**

When a self-declared Francophone has felt a call to ordered ministry and wishes to engage in the candidacy process in French, the Office of Vocation will encourage inquirers and candidates to call on La Table for the candidate's accompaniment needs. Should the candidacy originate from Shining Waters, a Candidate who wishes to carry out their process in French must work through the Candidacy Board responsible for Eastern Ontario and Québec where the resources will be available in French.

### **Nominations**

La Table has been granted formal nominating capacity for the General Council, General Council Executive and other committees and working groups of the United Church of Canada as of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council. At any time, should the Regional Council seek Francophones or suitably bilingual participants for committee or governance positions, La Table will make every effort to call upon members of its network with appropriate expertise to be nominated for such positions when requested by the Regional Council.

**Other issues**

As other issues arise that may not be covered by this covenant, the parties will be sensitive to the interests of other parties in their daily operations with the goal of ensuring a 'no surprises' relationship, mutual respect and understanding.

This Covenant may be modified with the agreement of all three parties at any time.

Agreed to, this 6th day of February, 2019. The document was signed by Peter Hartmans, Executive Minister Shining Waters, Éric Hébert-Daly, *Responsable des ministères en français*, La Table des ministères en français, and Nora Sanders, General Secretary, General Council.