

Proposals

A “proposal” is a formal request for a council to take action. It is one way that a United Church member may raise an issue that is important for the church, and ask the church to discern appropriate action. The council that is being asked to take action is called the “council of action.”

- In general, a proposal may be started by any one member of a community of faith, the governing body, a committee, or other church body of a community of faith.
- A proposal may also be started by
 - a) a member of the regional council or General Council;
 - b) a committee or other church body of the regional council or General Council; or
 - c) the regional council.
- Members and councils are responsible for completing the parts of the process assigned to them. See Manual 2024 (F.1 pp. 103-107)
- When a member of a community of faith makes a proposal, the member gives the proposal to the governing body of the community of faith.
- When a council makes a proposal, the first step is for the council to pass the proposal on to the next council.
- When a member of a council makes a proposal, the first step is for the member to pass the proposal on to that council.
- When a committee of a council makes a proposal, the first step is for the committee to pass the proposal on to that council.
- If the governing body is the council of action, it makes a decision on the proposal.
- If the regional council is the council of action:
 - a) The governing body decides if it agrees with the proposal.
 - b) If it agrees, the governing body must pass the proposal on to the regional council.
 - c) If it does not agree, the governing body decides whether or not to pass the proposal on to the regional council.

If the governing body does not agree with a proposal, it normally passes it on to the regional council only if there is a compelling reason.

 - d) The governing body may include its own recommendations when passing a proposal on to the regional council.
- If the General Council is the council of action:
 - a) The regional council decides if it agrees with the proposal.
 - b) If it agrees, the regional council passes the proposal on to the General Council.
 - c) If it does not agree, the regional council decides whether or not to pass the proposal on to the General Council.

If the regional council does not agree with a proposal, it normally passes it on to the General Council only if there is a compelling reason.

 - d) The regional council may include its own recommendations when passing a proposal on to the General Council.

- In determining if something is the proper subject matter for the regional council, consider if this is a matter for the full region, whether direction from the regional council is required, or whether it suggests a new policy or direction. (If the matter is currently the work of a committee or division, perhaps a discussion with the committee or division is the best action.
- In determining if something is the proper subject matter for a proposal to General Council, consider whether it pertains to the whole church, whether direction from the General Council is required, and whether it suggests a new policy or direction.
- The council making the decision must have the necessary information for a sound decision. In communicating from one council to another, it is important that the proposal gives an action and provides sufficient background to the emerging question, the consideration undertaken and the rationale for the proposed action.
- A well written proposal guides the decision makers through the process of discernment; from framing the question to a reasoned and wished for response and is no more than 2 (two) pages. A proposal may be accompanied by a more substantive report.
- The proposal, in order to be voted on as an action, must be made into a motion. Once a motion is made, it is put to the council. The normal rules of debate and procedure then are applied.

Response by Council of Action

The council of action is responsible for making a decision on the proposal. It has the following options:

- a) taking the action requested in the proposal;
- b) taking the action requested in the proposal with some changes;
- c) taking different action on the same subject matter as the proposal;
- d) referring the proposal;
- e) receiving the proposal but taking no further action; or
- f) taking some other action that the council of action decides is appropriate.

See Manual 2024 (F.1 pp. 103-107)

Proposal Template

Please see templates for completion of proposals:

- 1. Regional Council as the council of action (Template)**
- 2. General Council as the council of action (Guide and Template)**