PATHWAYS
EXECUTIVE SEARCH



Executive Minister, Indigenous Ministries and Justice

The United Church of Canada



The Organization

The United Church of Canada is the country's largest Protestant denomination, with an active membership of 340,000. Inaugurated in 1925, the Church was formed through the union of Methodist, Congregational, Presbyterian, and Local Union Church traditions. Today, its communities are connected through regional councils and the General Council, with the General Council Office providing national leadership, coordination, and support.

The United Church seeks to be a welcoming, justice-seeking, and evolving church. Its national life is grounded in Christian faith and shaped by commitments to becoming anti-racist, intercultural, affirming, accessible, barrier-free, and functionally multilingual, and to living in right relations with Indigenous Peoples. The Church has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as the framework for reconciliation and continues to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action and the Indigenous Church's Calls to the Church.

Call and Vision

Deep Spirituality | Bold Discipleship | Daring Justice.

The United Church of Canada seeks to be a bold, connected, evolving church of diverse, courageous, hope-filled communities united in deep spirituality, inspiring worship, and daring justice.

Values

Christian Faith • Sacred Story • Compassion • Integrity • Respect • Community • Equity • Reconciliation • Service • Humility • Innovation

The Organization continued

Strategic Direction

As The United Church of Canada enters its second century, it is undertaking a period of discernment, renewal, and transformation. Guided by its vision of being a bold, connected, evolving church united in deep spirituality, inspiring worship, and daring justice, the Church is working to strengthen its presence in communities across Canada while responding to the opportunities and realities of a changing society.

The Church's current strategic priorities focus on four interconnected areas: strengthening invitation and growth, emboldening justice, invigorating leadership, and journeying Indigenous pathways. Together, these priorities seek to deepen community impact, strengthen leadership, advance justice and reconciliation, and ensure the Church remains a vibrant and faithful presence for future generations. Learn more about the United Church's **Call and Vision, including its strategic objectives**.

The Indigenous Church

On a path of **Forging Right Relations**, the United Church has committed to establishing an autonomous Indigenous Church. The Indigenous Church is a distinct and evolving expression of Indigenous spiritual leadership, ministry, governance, and community life within The United Church of Canada. Grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing, spirituality, culture, and relationship, it continues to shape its future through Indigenous leadership and discernment.

Through Indigenous Ministries and Justice, and the leadership of the National Indigenous Council, National Indigenous Elders Council and the National Spiritual Gathering, the Church supports ongoing efforts toward Indigenous self-determination, healing, justice, and right relations. This work is informed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and the Indigenous Church's Calls to the Church.

A key priority is the continued development of the Indigenous Church's governance and autonomy within The United Church of Canada, including leadership development, theological expression, youth leadership, Indigenous ministries, and implementation of the **Calls to the Church**.



The Opportunity

The **Executive Minister, Indigenous Ministries and Justice** is a senior national leadership role that serves within the sacred life and governance of The United Church of Canada. Working in dual accountability to the General Secretary and the National Indigenous Council, the Executive Minister provides strategic, relational, and operational leadership across governance, ministry, leadership development, healing, reconciliation, and justice.

As a member of the Staff Leadership Group and at a pivotal moment in the evolution of the Indigenous Church, the Executive Minister, Indigenous Ministries and Justice, will support ongoing governance development, organizational renewal, and discernment regarding future leadership and decision-making structures. The role also helps advance Indigenous governance, leadership development, ministry, and community life within The United Church of Canada. Grounded in the Church's commitments to UNDRIP, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and the Calls to the Church, the role also helps ensure Indigenous priorities, perspectives, and relationships are meaningfully reflected across The United Church of Canada's broader ministries, governance structures, and national initiatives.

Working alongside Indigenous communities of faith, Elders, leadership bodies, staff, regional councils, and partners, the Executive Minister bridges vision and implementation, guiding the people, relationships, resources, and initiatives that advance Indigenous self-determination, healing, justice, and right relations.

Key Responsibilities

Relational and Accountable Leadership

- Lead with humility, respect, and a commitment to right relations, embodying Indigenous values of balance, reciprocity, and collective responsibility.
- Walk alongside Indigenous Ministries and Justice staff, fostering a supportive, collaborative, and culturally grounded team environment.
- Ensure that the priorities and vision of the National Indigenous Council guide all aspects of the work.
- Exercise leadership in ways that honour the gifts, teachings, and lived experiences of others.
- Create space for discernment, listening, and shared decision-making.
- Model faithful stewardship of people, resources, and relationships, including care for self and others

Stewardship of Indigenous Ministries and Justice Work

- Support the continued development and renewal of Indigenous governance structures, including work related to the ongoing strengthening and rebuilding of the National Indigenous Council and associated leadership bodies.
- Support and implement the vision, direction, and priorities of the National Indigenous Council.
- Develop methodologies to help the leadership of the Indigenous church discern how best to shape future direction for the Indigenous church.
- Develop and implement a governance structure and policies for the Indigenous church, collaboratively with the NIC, and in consultation with the NIEC.
- Ensure effective communication of National Indigenous Organization (NIO) and NIEC plans, priorities, and activities across the Indigenous church and with the United Church as a whole.
- Provide leadership across justice initiatives, including those related to residential schools, the TRC Calls to Action, healing, reconciliation, and systemic inequities.
- Ensure a holistic approach that integrates pastoral care, legal considerations, education, communications, and community-based healing practices.
- Coordinate and weave together the work of the General Council to ensure it is aligned, collaborative, and responsive to Indigenous priorities.
- Convene and support national and regional gatherings of Indigenous peoples in ways that honour culture, ceremony, and community.
- Encourage and strengthen networks across the Church to build right relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Key Responsibilities continued

People and Community Leadership

- Provide mentorship, guidance, and ongoing support to staff, encouraging growth, learning, and well-being.
- Create a workplace culture grounded in respect, inclusion, and shared purpose.
- Address challenges and conflict with care, integrity, and a commitment to restorative approaches.
- Support staff in living out the Indigenous Church's vision and the Calls to the Church.
- Ensure accountability and care in performance management, always mindful of relationships and community impact.
- Work collaboratively with Human Resources to recruit, hire, and support staff in ways that are culturally respectful and equitable.

Advocacy, Partnership, and Right Relations

- Walk alongside Indigenous ministries, communities of faith, and partners such as the Sandy Saulteaux Centre to amplify their voices and concerns.
- Ensure that Indigenous perspectives shape the Indigenous Church's work in spiritual formation, leadership development, and justice initiatives.
- Build strong relationships across the wider Church to foster understanding, reconciliation, and meaningful partnership.
- Listen deeply to Indigenous communities to discern emerging needs and priorities, bringing this forward to General Council leadership.
- Serve as a trusted resource on Indigenous ministry, justice, and reconciliation for the wider Church.

Key Responsibilities continued

Compensation and Working Environment

The salary range for this position is $120,030 to $160,041 annually. The United Church of Canada offers a comprehensive benefits package that includes an annual cost-of-living adjustment; a defined benefit pension plan with a 9% employer and 6% employee contribution; group benefits from the first day of employment; funding for continuing professional development; reimbursement for relevant professional memberships; paid time off between Christmas and New Year; and professional development leave after one year.

The United Church has adopted a hybrid workplace model, combining off-site work with time in the General Council Office in Toronto. The role requires availability during regular Monday-to-Friday office hours, occasional additional hours, and travel for meetings, community gatherings, and ceremonies. Reasonable accommodation is available in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code.



The Candidate

The ideal candidate is a respected and spiritually grounded leader with deep experience working with Indigenous communities, governance bodies, and faith-based, Indigenous, or justice-oriented organizations. They bring a strong understanding of Indigenous governance, spirituality, community life, and the ongoing work of healing, reconciliation, and justice, together with a strong church background and the leadership maturity to navigate a complex national organization. They have experience leading organizational change, governance development, and relationship-building in complex environments.

Grounded in Indigenous values, faith traditions, and ways of knowing, the successful candidate will bring experience leading people, stewarding resources, supporting governance and policy development, and building collaborative relationships across diverse communities. They will be comfortable working alongside Elders, Knowledge Keepers, church leaders, volunteers, staff, and partners while advancing Indigenous self-determination, right relations, and the priorities of the Indigenous Church.

Their leadership is characterized by humility, integrity, sound judgment, and a capacity for discernment, learning, and service. They communicate complex issues with clarity and care while fostering cultures of accountability, respect, and shared purpose.

The Candidate continued

Qualifications, Skills, and Abilities

Education

- Graduate theological education or an equivalent combination of formal, cultural, and community-based learning.
- Ordination or recognized leadership within a faith community or Indigenous organization is an asset.

Experience

- Seven to eight (7-8) years of progressive senior leadership experience providing leadership at a regional or national level.
- Knowledge of The United Church of Canada and its history.

Skills and Abilities

Indigenous Leadership and Ministry

- A spiritually grounded understanding of, and respect for, Indigenous values, faith and traditions, with a strong commitment and engagement to the work of Indigenous Ministries and the ability to reflect theologically on issues affecting Indigenous Peoples within the United Church.
- Demonstrated experience working with Indigenous communities, including Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous governance bodies.
- Experience advancing Indigenous justice, healing, reconciliation, and right relations, including knowledge of the impacts of colonization and residential schools.

Leadership and Stewardship

- Strong leadership skills, anchored in a holistic approach, balancing the spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional dimensions of leadership.
- Experience managing people and building cohesive staff teams.
- Strong organizational leadership skills, including strategic planning, coordination, governance, and stewardship of financial and human resources.
- Awareness of organizational development concepts and the flexibility to respond to changing needs and priorities.

The Candidate continued

Relationship Building and Communication

- Excellent relationship-building and communication skills across diverse communities.
- Ability to work collegially with volunteers and staff colleagues, with knowledge of small group dynamics and cross-cultural process skills.
- Ability to create effective networking and communication structures internally and externally.
- Strong written, verbal, and presentation skills, including the ability to communicate effectively in highly emotional or complex situations.

Judgement and Adaptability

- Ability to discern appropriate pathways through complex issues and understand the implications of decisions and actions.
- Experience managing administrative responsibilities, conflict, and change.
- Flexibility, initiative, good judgement, tact, discretion, resourcefulness, and creativity in problem-solving.
- Ability to make sound and timely decisions and develop effective solutions to organizational challenges.

Additional Assets

- Solid computer skills in Office 365, Dynamics, SharePoint, OneDrive, Teams, Zoom, and related platforms.
- Indigenous or French language skills, in addition to English, are considered assets.
- Willingness to travel and engage in community gatherings and ceremonies.

The Location – Hybrid: Canada Wide

Main Office – Tkaronto - Toronto

This is a hybrid position, and the successful candidate may be based anywhere in Canada. This position may include some travel to the UCC Main Office in Toronto as well as other faith communities.

The name Toronto is derived from the Mohawk word “tkaronto,” which means “where there are trees standing in the water.” It is the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples. It is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, along with other Indigenous groups that represent this valued community.

Toronto has a population of 2.8 million people, making it the largest city in Canada, the fourth-largest city in North America, one of the top 25 cities globally for its quality of living. Toronto also welcomes 40 million tourists a year. It supports a lively art and culture scene that includes museums, galleries, performing arts organizations, and many festivals (including the Indigenous Art Festival). Toronto is recognized as one of the most diverse and multicultural cities in the world.

Toronto is the home to multiple post-secondary institutions – Humber College, George Brown College, the University of Toronto (the largest university in Canada), Ryerson University, York University, and OCAD University.

Its world-renowned arts and culture scene is highlighted by the Royal Ontario Museum, an iconic building boasting the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal inspired by its extensive gem and mineral collection; the design was quickly dubbed the ‘crystal’ because of its crystalline shape. The Royal Ontario Museum has a unique 100-year history of conducting ground-breaking research in all areas of art, culture, and nature

Just offshore from the city centre are the Toronto Islands known as “Menecing,” meaning “On the Island” in the Ojibwe language. The Islands are home to parklands and the Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport. The Islands community is considered the largest urban car-free community in North America.



Application Process

To apply, please submit a cover letter and resume in PDF format to Pathways Executive Search outlining your interest, qualifications, and experience.

Email: Applications@PathwaysExecutiveSearch.com. Please include The United Church of Canada in the subject line.

For more details or to further explore this important strategic leadership opportunity, please contact:

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Pathways Executive Search is an international executive recruitment firm, known for its ability to attract and recruit talent in culturally grounded ways. Guided by Indigenous values and principles of Indigenous inclusion, Pathways walks with those looking to broaden candidate pools, find qualified and experienced candidates, and live out their values and commitment to creating workplace cultures where people can thrive.