

---

Note from Nora - July 13, 2017



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA  
L'ÉGLISE UNIE DU CANADA

**July 13, 2017**

*Our church has spoken strongly for change, to better serve God and make a difference in the world.*



[Photo: Nora Sanders (left) congratulates Teresa (Terri) Hord Owens, after she was elected as General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).]

Thunder is rumbling outside the giant hall in Indianapolis where the [General](#)

[Assembly of the Church of Christ \(Disciples of Christ\)](#) is meeting. I am here because we are in a full communion conversation with the Disciples, who are already in full communion with [our full communion](#) partner, the United Church of Christ. That's quite a mouthful, and maybe it would be better to simply explain that the theme for this [Assembly](#) is ONE: a one word summary of the [John 17:21](#) passage that we have on the [United Church Crest](#).

We have a lot of in common with this denomination, with its strong commitment for Christian unity. It's always good to spend time with Christian brothers and sisters and this week is proving to be a great opportunity to deepen relationships and to get ideas for our 43rd General Council, which will have a new Festival of Faith component. The Disciples do their business in a more succinct way, and allocate more time to workshops and learning sessions on ministry, justice and worship topics. I find inspiration in the Disciples' commitment, renewed this week, to launch 1,000 new ministries by 2020. Talk about embracing change!

It's hard not to be a little distracted this week. Just a week ago, we were finalizing the numbers from ballots received from four remits that had a June 30 deadline, and preparing the announcement to let the church know that [Remits 1 to 4 had all passed](#) by significant majorities in both presbyteries and pastoral charges.

Our church has spoken strongly for change. Of course the decisions won't be final unless and until the General Council approves the remit results in July next year. There is lots to be done between now and next July though, so that things will be ready for action following the decisions of General Council. It will be a busy year in the General Council Office, and in all parts of the church as people plan and prepare.

Structural change necessarily has occupied a huge amount of our time over the past few years. Even with all the work that lies ahead before the remit changes can be implemented, it is my hope that we can also move into a time of considering more deeply what it means for us to be church.

Our structures are important but only as they allow us to serve God and make a difference in the world.

A time of change creates a wonderful opportunity to dream anew about the things we yearn to do, as we live out the teachings of scripture in today's world. It is also a time to think about the world we want our children and grandchildren to inherit.

The theme that the Moderator has chosen for next year's General Council is "Risking Faith, Daring Hope." May we gather next July with abundant hope and faith for our church and the world. May the thunder roll....

Nora