

On the road to a new Constitution...

“Did not our hearts burn within us as He talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us.” Luke 24: 32

- August 21, 1995, Halifax, N.S. - CLC Canada's first Constitution
- June 26, 1999, Winnipeg, Man. * (CLC Canada's Constitution revised - See note # 1 below)
- October 2006 – October 2007 – Revisions recommended by the Constitution Working Group and approved by General Council and sent out to all communities for consideration in this 1st draft
- November 2007- 2008 – further revisions considered from membership and incorporated
- April 2008 – Final recommended Constitution document distributed to all members one year in advance of the 2009 Guelph Assembly
- May 2009 – Incorrect constitution document uploaded on our CLC Canada website and it was determined by the 2009 Guelph Assembly that the process would have to begin anew as there were two versions of the constitution
- January 2010 – New Constitution Working Group of Peter Chouinard and Pamela Nowina mandated by General Council
- February 2010 - Gratitude for the previous good work towards a revised Constitution acknowledged by our new Constitution Working Group and our new General Council
- March – April 2010 - all previous draft revisions as well as the original Constitution were tracked down and collated by the present Constitution Working Group to follow in preparation for the new process
- October 2010 - Leah Michaud (Elder) invited to join the Constitution Working Group of Peter Chouinard and Pamela Nowina
- January 2011 - Pam Nowina regrets unable to continue and resigns from the Constitution Working Group
- April 2011 – New Constitution Working Group mandated - Leah Michaud, Gerri Tingley, Betty Poley and Peter Chouinard.* (See note # 2 below)
- June 28, 2012 - The 1st draft of revised constitution completed and uploaded to CLC Canada website for member reflection and opportunity to submit suggested changes for the 2nd draft
- September 15, 2012 - 2nd draft completed - includes feedback and recommendations from our membership
- March 28, 2013 - 3rd draft completed - includes feedback and recommendations from our membership
- April 17, 2013 - 4th draft completed - includes recommendations and feedback from General Council, the Constitution Working Group and others engaged in the process
- May 6, 2013 - Final document recommended by the Constitution Working Group and approved by General Council
- May 15, 2013 – Final document(s) uploaded to the CLC Canada website – includes both the recommended final document in a clean copy and the final document with all of the explanations from each draft.

Notes:

(1) Some revisions made at the Winnipeg National Assembly in 1999 were not submitted to our membership one year in advance. (As per our Constitution) The Canadian Common Mission was

ratified, as it was previously circulated one year in advance of the assembly. The change from the former "Western Region", to the Prairies and the Rockies, was not circulated one year in advance as this occurred at the assembly. CLC Canada has ***lived out of the intent*** of this change from the "Western Region" to Prairies Region and Rockies Region since 1999. This new Constitution will correct this.

(2) Pam Nowina was unable to continue as part of the Constitution Working Group. General Council approved a new Constitution working Group consisting of 4 Atlantic CLC members so as to enable the group to meet face to face for this important work when necessary. The balance of input from across Canada made the process totally inclusive.

Seeking consensus at our Assembly...

The Constitution Working Group (**Betty Poley, Leah Michaud, Gerri Tingley and Peter Chouinard**, recommended to our General Council, and subsequently approval was given, to invite **Elaine Regan Nightingale** of our Central Region, to facilitate the Constitution process toward consensus at the National Assembly. We are pleased to say that Elaine has discerned (with the help of her community, Companions CLC, Toronto) a yes and will guide us toward that goal. Following is the consensus process we will use based on our current SOP # 15.

The Grace of Consensus

Communal decision-making is usually done by means of the grace of consensus as a sign that **the will of God** for the group or that the most loving action that the group can choose has been discovered/discerned .

- Eph. 5:10 "...Try to *discover* what the Lord wants of you..."
- Phil 1:9-10 " that your love may grow more and more with the knowledge and complete understanding that will help you to come to true discernment"

The Goal of Consensus

The goal of consensus is that EVERY member of the group can come to one decision that they all can freely accept, support and uphold. But consensus does not necessarily mean uniformity. Rather it means that at the end of the discernment process everyone in the group can **freely**:

- accept or support the decision reached by the group and
- be in communion with the group.

The Process of Consensus

Consensus is always present in a group, even if the group comes to a consensus there that they have no consensus about a particular matter. Deep and respectful listening to one another can surface where consensus is and at what level.

2/3 Majority Consensus

This form of consensus is reflected in **CLC Canada's S.O.P # 15** (Standard Operating Procedure) This form of consensus is usually reserved for decisions on core documents or major decisions "... a Constitution, Mission/Vision decisions and appointments" It may be used when a unanimous or negotiated consensus cannot be reached – or it may be the only form chosen at the beginning of the decision-making process. For a 2/3 majority consensus it is assumed that the required 'quorum' is present (50% of all those eligible to participate in the discernment process). If this 2/3 consensus cannot be reached, the matter is defeated.