



Anatomy of a Decision

Paul Stott

Trinity-St. Paul's United Church

October 21, 2007



Presentation Overview

- The Decision
- Background – Organizational Change
- How the Decision was Made
- Why the Decision was Made



The Decision

- General Council Executive, June 2007, reduction of GCO staff complement from 185.5 to 165.5
- Specifically, reducing JGER complement from 24.0 to 19.0 primarily in Canadian Social Justice area
- Cutback in Canadian & Overseas Grants in 2008, 2009



Background

- GCO reorganization in 2002
- Staff – Governance Relationship
- Staff Structure



GCO Reorganization

- Formerly Divisional Structure
 - General Secretaries Group
- Now Unit Structure with Senior Leadership Team
 - Moderator, GSGC
 - General Council Ministers: Programs for Mission & Ministry, Resources for Mission & Ministry, Racial and Gender Justice, Planning Processes, Regional Relations



GCO Reorganization

- Significant results
 - Senior Management better able to view totality of GCO work
 - Clarification of Governance/Management division



Governance and Management

- Governance
- Elected and Appointed Members
 - General Council
 - GCE
 - Permanent Committees
 - Unit-wide Committees
 - Other Committees and Task Groups
- Management
- GCO Staff
 - GSGC
 - General Council Ministers
 - Executive Ministers
 - Unit Staff



Governance and Management

- Reorganization has generated a focus on respective responsibilities of Governors and Managers
- Care in exercising responsibilities
 - Staff do not set policy
 - GCE does not micromanage



Governance – General Council

- 382 Commissioners elected by Conferences
- Meets every three years
- Elects Moderator, appoints GSGC
- “to legislate on matters respecting the doctrine, worship, membership and government of the United Church . . .”



Governance - GCE

- 43 Voting Members
 - 26 Conference Reps
 - 4 Members at Large (2 under 30)
 - 2 Francophone, 2 Ethnic
 - 4 Chairs of Permanent Committees
 - UCC member of WCC Central Committee
 - Chair of GCE Agenda, Planning & Business Cttee
 - Moderator, Immediate Past Moderator, GSGC



Governance - GCE

- 24 Corresponding Members
 - 5 General Council Ministers
 - 13 Conference Executive Secretaries (Speaker)
 - Chairs of Theology & Faith Cttee, GC
Agenda & Planning Cttee, National UCW,
Observer Board
 - Archivist
 - Global Partner Representative



Governance – GCE

- Meets twice yearly
- Duties and Powers (Manual – Section 524)
- “... to ensure that, so far as possible, the decisions and recommendations of the General Council are carried out; ..”



How the Decision was Made

- Role of General Council - Purpose
- Role of GCE - Priorities
- Role of GSGC - Program
- Role of Staff – Work Plans



Role of General Council

- GC39 (2006) tasked with answering “Where is God calling the UCC today?”
- Kerygma Café process used
- Listening Team listened and synthesized the inputs
- Call to Purpose developed and approved by Council



Role of GCE

- To apply Call to Purpose to develop a work plan and budget for GCO for the 2007-2010 triennium
- Established a Priorities Task Group in November 2006 to establish principles in line with Call to Purpose
- GCE then approved a framework for staff to develop a work plan and budget



GCE Action - Vision

- Affirm Call to Purpose as a statement of the church to the church for the purposes of determining the allocation of GC resources
- Affirm that planning for the period 2008-2010
 - Give priority in no particular order to that which
 - Deepens our experience of intentional and authentic communities; stretches us beyond the familiar expressions and concerns of our church, with particular concern for our commitment to youth and young adult ministry; becoming an intercultural church; and living with respect in creation
 - Supports and develops congregational ministries;
 - Supports and empowers ministry personnel;
 - Addresses the church's brokenness in the relationships with aboriginal peoples and moving toward healing and building right relations



GCE Action (continued)

- Retains flexibility to accommodate emergent work appropriately directed;
 - Sustains those activities that are required to meet legal and The Manual obligations;
 - Sustains the required core operations; and
 - Be informed by the summaries and data gathered by the Priority Setting exercises.
- Direct that the GSGC develop plans and budgets for the years 2008 – 2010 for presentation to the June 2007 (special) meeting of GCE



Role of the Staff

- Evaluate 94 separate work plans in the light of the framework (Ongoing work, GC mandated new work)
- Translate individual work plans into staffing and budget requirements for Units
- Develop staffing plans and budgets for the triennium for GCE consideration



Why the Decision was made

- Financial Overview
 - UCC raises ~\$350 million per year and this amount increases yearly by ~2%
 - M&S givings have been ~\$30 million for the past 20 years
 - The real value of M&S givings is dropping yearly by amount of inflation
 - Costs are constantly increasing, particularly staffing costs
 - Formerly, shortfalls were made up by drawing on Reserve Funds



Why the Decision was made

- Breakdown of GCO Expense Budget
 - Grants ~45%
 - Salaries ~30%
 - Program ~12%
 - Meetings and Travel
 - Rent
 - Operations
- Revised Budget kept proportions essentially the same



Why the decision was made

- We assumed that NONE of the work currently being done was unimportant
- We needed to honour the Call to Purpose of GC by initiating/emphasizing identified areas of work (proactive, not reactive)
- We were working with a financial projection of decreasing real dollars through M&S
- Cuts were required to allow new or newly emphasized work to be done



Why the decision was made

- Across the board cut is not a reasonable strategy
- Balance to cuts for operations/grants
- Delay grant cuts to give proper notice
- Equal cuts to Mission Support grants in Canada and to Overseas Partners
- Retain most of JGER Overseas partner capacity, since this is unique gift/call



Results of Decision - Cuts

- Elimination of Berkley Studios and TV capabilities (7 net staff)
- Resource Production and Distribution (3 net staff)
- JGER (5 net staff)
- Congregational Educational & Community Ministries (5 net staff)
- Finance (4 net staff)



Summary

- Decision Making honoured our polity and structure
- Decisions made in good faith, listening for the Spirit, by Elected and Appointed members
- Staff contributed appropriately to decision making process
- Cuts affected many areas of the church's work
- Decisions were painful, but necessary
- Decisions are for the 2007-2010 period
- Steps are being taken to improve our financial situation, but will not affect income significantly before 2010