

**REMIT CORNER #5**  
**REMIT 6- ONE ORDER OF MINISTRY**

This is the question to be voted on:

At present there is one order of ministry that is made up of ordained ministers, ordained to word, sacrament and pastoral care, and diaconal ministers, commissioned to education, service and pastoral care. There is also a category of ministry made up of those who are recognized as designated lay ministers following successful completion of a specific program of study.

**Does the presbytery/pastoral charge agree that there should be one new order of ministry encompassing the present categories of recognized designated lay ministers, diaconal ministers, and ordained ministers, with ordination to the ministry of word, sacrament, education, service and pastoral care as the single rite of entry, and with provision for the continued identity of the diakonia within the ordained ministry?**

While each is distinctive in definition and history, several task groups have identified the difficulty in distinguishing among the various streams of ministry in the United Church; in particular, explaining the functional difference among designated lay ministry, diaconal ministry, and ordained ministry. Moreover, various surveys have pointed to congregations not being concerned about the differences among the various streams of ministry, but rather deeply concerned about effective and faithful ministry leadership.

The reality on the ground is that each stream is commonly appointed or called to similar functions in solo pastoral ministry leadership, including the sacraments. Recent proposals for authorizing diaconal ministers for the sacraments as a rite of commissioning have further minimized distinctions. Most diaconal and designated lay ministers are already authorized by their Conferences for the sacraments. In relation to designated lay ministry, the word "lay" is often misunderstood.

If the remit is approved, there will be one form of ordered ministry in the United Church known as the ordained ministry of word, sacrament, and pastoral care and of education and service.

Background material including a study guide for exploring the proposal, plus detailed discussion about all aspects of this proposed change in our church's ministry. This comprehensive document can be found at <http://gc42.ca/remits>, under Resources.