

## EXECUTIVE BRIEF

### Alignment Recommendation for the Ministry of Endorsement

#### *A Structural Discernment Report*

#### **Purpose:**

Endorsement supports clergy serving in settings where institutional standards, federal requirements, and episcopal oversight intersect. With organizational restructuring and regionalization unfolding, endorsement requires alignment that provides **supervisory clarity, institutional credibility, and operational stability**.

Four potential alignment pathways suited to sustain this ministry are analyzed.

#### **Alignment Pathways Considered:**

- 1. Continuity Model** – UMEA office continues under GBHEM governance and supervision.
- 2. Restored Division Model** – UMEA restored as a division within GBHEM, increasing visibility while retaining agency oversight.
- 3. Affiliated Commission Model** – Governance by a Council of Bishops–constituted commission; administrative support and staffing continuity through GBHEM (or a successor structure).
- 4. Independent Commission Model** – A standalone commission with episcopal governance and its own administrative systems.

#### **Key Evaluation Criteria:**

- Supervisory clarity and episcopal accountability
- Institutional credibility and external representation
- Administrative and operational capacity
- Integration with connectional identity
- Adaptability under regionalization
- Continuity of ministry for clergy and institutions
- Fiscal responsibility
- Feasibility and long-term sustainability

#### **Comparative Insights (Condensed):**

- **Continuity Model** – Stable, perpetuates ambiguity in authority and episcopal alignment.
- **Restored Division Model** – Improves identity within GBHEM, does not resolve ambiguity.
- **Independent Commission Model** – Strong ecclesially, costly, complex, but heavy lift.
- **Affiliated Commission Model** – Resolves ambiguities, strengthens institutional trust, preserves staffing and systems, and adapts well to evolving connectional structures.

#### **Recommendation:**

##### **The Affiliated Commission Model is recommended.**

Balances episcopal oversight, administrative stability, institutional credibility, and adaptability. Strengthens Church's supervisory commitments and maintains continuity of service.

#### **Transition Principles:**

##### **Principles that apply if the Church chooses to pursue this alignment:**

- **Continuity:** No disruption in services to endorsed clergy or institutions.
- **Collaboration:** Connectional partners should clarify roles together.
- **Phased Realignment:** Governance may shift before administrative adjustments.
- **Transparent Communication:** Consistent messaging will sustain confidence.

#### **Conclusion:**

Endorsement cannot remain in structural ambiguity. The ministry is too important—and too exposed institutionally—to operate without a clear and settled home. Any transition the Church undertakes will require clarity, steadiness, and sustained follow-through.