

FINDING AID

Administrative Records of the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Fonds

Series 500/1 Conference Annual Meetings

- 500/1/1 Minutes of the Conference Annual Meetings
- 500/1/2 Conference Annual Meeting Planning and Programming

Author Linda White, 2002, Revised 2003, 2006, 2013, 2014

United Church of Canada Archives Winnipeg

University of Winnipeg

uccarchiveswinnipeg.ca

© 2006

500 Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Conference fonds. -- 1917 - 2004; predominant 1954-1993. -- 43m of textual records and other material.

The Conference of Manitoba came into existence in June of 1925 with the creation of The United Church of Canada through the union of the Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational and Local Union Churches of Canada. The name was changed in 1980 to the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario as a result of a successful petition to the General Council of the United Church by Cambrian Presbytery. The Conference encompasses the entire province of Manitoba and the area of Northwestern Ontario drained by the Rainy River and Winnipeg River systems as far east as Marathon, Ontario and south to the United States border.

The Conference has an administrative as well as a geographic meaning. The thirteen conferences within The United Church of Canada function as a governing body or court of the church. Very simply, they are composed of members of the Order of Ministry on the roll of Presbyteries within the geographical bounds of the Conference and lay persons under appointment to administrative or staff positions within the Conference by a court of the church or the United Church General Council. These are matched by an equal number of lay representatives elected from the Pastoral Charges within the Conference. Chairpersons of Conference Committees and the President of the Conference United Church Women are also members of Conference. In addition to the obligation to meet annually and to appoint a Conference Executive, the Conference was charged with appointing Standing and Special Committees to carry out the day to day work of the Conference. In 1925 these were Education and Students, Evangelism and Social Service, Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Pensions, Publications, Religious Education, Missionary and Maintenance Fund, Church Property, Settlement, Statistics, Historical and Obituaries.

With a few exceptions, the structure of Conference remained essentially the same until 1972 when a major realignment of the administrative structure of the United Church at the General Council (National) and Conference levels took place. In 1972, the Boards of Home Missions, Evangelism and Social Service and Christian Education had ceased to exist along with the staff positions associated with that work. New paid staff positions which made their first appearance around this time were Regional Director of Broadcasting in 1971 (lasting only until 1972), the positions of Conference Personnel and Conference Administrative Support in 1972 and the positions of Leadership Development and Program Resource in 1973. In 1975 and 1976, and again from 1989 to 1993, a staff position for Communications was added. In 1983, the Conference staff position of Christian Development and Outreach was created and, in 1986, an Evangelism and Social Action staff person as well as a full time Conference Archivist was hired.

The changes in National and Conference administrative structure, which resulted from a move towards more regional and local control of church programs, were reflected in the evolution of Conference Committees. The powerful Conference Home Missions Committee and its sub-committees, responsible for overseeing the mission initiatives of Conference and the administration of mission grants according to Board of Home Missions directives, had been replaced by the Administrative Support Committee (briefly called the Congregational Support Committee) by 1973. Another major reorganisation of the Conference committee structure took place in 1983 when a system for the division of the work of Conference committees among four Councils (Stewardship, Worship and Education, Ministry and Personnel, Evangelism and Social Action) was devised. Committee chairs reported to their respective Councils that in turn were represented on the Conference Executive.

Another major reorganisation of Conference Structure took place in 1993. At that time, the pressure of meeting current demands with dwindling resources resulted in a move to reduce the number of Presbyteries from eight to six. The work previously allocated among four Conference Councils was then divided between three Program Units (Education and Justice, Ministry and Personnel, and Stewardship and Mission). The number of Committees reporting to the Program Units, and through them to the Conference Executive was reduced. Salaried staff were also decreased and reorganised to include the positions of Executive Secretary, Education and Justice staff person, Stewardship and Mission staff person, Personnel staff person and Conference Archivist. Further changes to the Conference Structure were made in 2005.

Many of the materials which make up this Conference fonds had been stored in the basement of the Conference administrative offices at 120 Maryland Street in Winnipeg in an ad hoc manner for varying lengths of time over a period of approximately forty years before coming into the Archives. Generally, the records of Conference executive, staff and committee chairs were transferred to the basement at the end of their term of office. Renovations to and rearrangement of the basement area resulted in the movement of the materials around the storage area on more than one occasion. It is probable that space constraints resulted in the unrecorded disposal of an undetermined number of documents and other materials throughout the storage period. Administrative records in storage at 120 Maryland were formally transferred to the Archives in 1989. The movement of the Conference administrative offices to a new address in the fall of 1996 precipitated an inventory and the relocation of those records in 1995 prior to the move. The balance of the fonds consists of record series that had been accessioned by the Archives at various periods prior to 1995. The provenance of records accessioned prior to 1976 is often obscure.

The fonds consists of textual and other materials generated by the Conference, the Conference Executive, Conference Staff Associates and Conference Committee members in the fulfilment of their mandate as outlined in *The Manual of The United Church of Canada* from 1925 to 1994. Throughout the life of the fonds, several Conference staff members have served in more than one church or community administration simultaneously while keeping unified files. This has resulted in materials from other administrative jurisdictions being interspersed among the fonds.

Fonds are composed of the following series: Conference Annual Meetings, 1925-1993; Conference Executive, 1925-2002; Conference Offices, 1958-1989; Committees, Task Forces and Working Groups Answering to the Executive and Sub-Executive, 1968-1993; Manitoba Conference Branch of The United Church Woman's Missionary Society, 1918-1962; Manitoba Conference Branch Woman's Missionary Society Archives Collection, [ca.1885-ca.1960]; Manitoba Conference Lay Association, [ca.1910]-1962; District Council AOTS, 1964-1977; Conference Committee on Christian Education, 1927-1992; Conference Home Missions Committee, 1926-1973; Superintendents of Home Missions, 1926-1973; records of the Administration of Norway House Residential School, 1954-1967; Conference Hospitals, 1923-1982; Home Missions Inter-Conference and Ecumenical Groups, 1956-1969; Conference Evangelism and Social Service Committee, 1933-1976; Conference Congregational Life and Work, 1952-1979; Church in Society Committee, 1976-1983; Evangelsim and Social Action Council, 1983-1993; Inter-Conference and Ecumenical Groups reporting to the Evangelsim and Social Action Council , 1972-1999; Conference Communications, 1964-1992; Worship and Education Council, 1981-1994; Worship and Education Council Women's Groups, 1982-1992; Education and Justice Unit, 1987 - 2004 (predominately 1993 - 1998); Committee on Education, Students and Church Vocations, 1975-1978; Conference Education Committee, 1972-1983; [Interim] Placement Committee, 1970-1972; Conference Settlement Committee, 1971-1980; Conference Staff Committee, 1966-1992; Ministry and Personnel Council, 1982-1993; Conference Personnel Officer, 1972-1993; Conference Personnel Records, 1957-1993; records of the Conference Finance Committee, 1964-1974; records of Conference Administrative Support, 1973-1983; records of Administrative Support Staff, 1972-1993; Conference Stewardship, 1967-1993; Church Camps, 1918-1975; Church Home for Girls, 1945-1976; Women's Union, 1926-1958; Manitoba Conference Woman's Association, 1946-1962; Conference United Church Women, 1963-2002; Fellowship of Professional Women, 1949-1980; Manitoba Canadian Girls in Training, 1918-1990; and the Manitoba Student Christian Movement, 1923-1981.

Title based on contents of fonds.

The fonds also includes ephemera, photographs, slides, audio tape recordings, video tape recordings and 50 sets of blueprints, plans and architects' drawings.

Original order of many of the series of the fonds was substantially obscured during the storage period and many materials were in an extremely disorganised state with no original order or access points apparent; where necessary, order based on administrative function has been reconstructed by the arranging archivist.

Some restrictions on access; see series descriptions.

Finding Aids consist of series descriptions and box lists; some sub-series and file level description available.

Further accruals are expected.

500/1 Conference Annual Meetings. -- 1925-1998. -- 2.6m textual records.

It is the duty of the Conference to meet annually and to appoint a Conference Executive. The Annual Meeting of Conference has the responsibility of determining the number and boundaries of Presbyteries within Conference; of receiving and considering memorials and petitions with which Conference may or may not concur before forwarding to General Council; ordaining or commissioning Candidates for the Order of Ministry as recommended by Presbytery; admitting to the Order of Ministry diaconal ministers or ordained ministers from other denominations according to the regulations of General Council; and insuring, as far as possible, that every Pastoral Charge is served by a pastorate through the operation of a Settlement Committee. The Conference also elects members to the General Council, deals with matters referred to the Conference by General Council and oversees the religious life within the boundaries of the Conference and adopts measures judged necessary for its promotion. Delegates to the Annual Meeting of Conference include the members of the Order of Ministry on the roll of Presbyteries within the geographical bounds of the Conference and lay persons under appointment to administrative or staff positions within the Conference by a court of the church or the United Church General Council. These are matched by an equal number of lay representatives elected from the Pastoral Charges within the Conference. Chairpersons of Conference Committees and the President of the Conference United Church Women are also members of Conference. (*The Manual of The United Church of Canada*, 1995, pp. 22-25.)

This series consists of the following sub-series: Minutes of Conference Annual Meetings, 1925-1998; and Annual Meeting Planning and Programming, 1964-1998.

Further accruals are expected.

500/1/1 Minutes of Conference Annual Meetings. -- 1925-1998. -- 1.6m textual records.

The Conference has met every year since Union with the exception of 1975 when the Conference experimented with a biennial meeting schedule. A record of the business conducted at these annual meetings, in the form of minutes signed or 'verified' by the President and Secretary of Conference, is always kept. Published copies of this record, which were meant for wider distribution, were also produced. This published record was known as the Minutes of the Conference from 1925 to 1931, the Digest of the Minutes of the Conference from 1932 to 1940, the Digest of the Minutes and Proceedings from 1941 to 1956 and the Record of Proceedings thereafter. A digest of the Minutes of the Conference Executive and Sub-Executive, which was empowered to act for the Conference between its regular meetings, was usually (but, not always) included in the Record of Proceedings from 1955 onwards. It was also usual for the Annual Reports of the Conference Committees to be included in the Record of Proceedings although this was sometimes precluded by limitations of space. Also included as part of this record would be the Roll of Conference; lists of candidates for the Ministry and the names of those transferring into and out of the Conference; the report of the Statistical Secretary; and obituaries and tributes.

Items described as part of this sub-series include of Minutes of Conference, 1927-1994; Minutes of Sessions, 1972-1974; and Annual Reports to Conference, 1969-1989.

Title based on contents.

File level description; box lists available; indexes to the published Minutes of Conference Annual Meetings are found in each volume; an aggregate index to the published Minutes of Conference Annual Meetings is also available for the years 1925-1970.

Accession: 1985-2; 1996-21; and others.

Location: Box 500/1-1; Box 500/1-2; Box 500/1-3; Box S-1-1.

File Description

1. Minutes of Conference. -- 1927-1994. -- 32 volumes.

Volumes contain the 'official' minutes of Conference Annual Meetings. These are recognised as the official version by virtue of having been signed and/or initialled by the Conference President and the Conference Secretary/Executive Secretary. Also found here are appendices to the minutes. The published Records of Proceedings and the 'official' minutes of Conference were virtually identical from 1969 onwards (Minutes of Executive/Sub-Executive, June 19, 1969) although an 'official copy' usually was signed by the Conference President and Executive Secretary.

Title based on contents.

No Annual Meeting was held in 1975.

Location: Box 500/1-1; Box 500/1-2; and Box 500/1-3.

2. Minutes of Sessions. --1972, 1974. -- 2 folders.

These folders contain the minutes of the Conference Annual Meetings for the years 1972 and 1974. However, no other information, such as annual reports to Conference is appended. Individual pages have been signed or initialled by the then President of Conference and the Executive Secretary.

Title taken from folder labels.

Location: Box 500/1-2.

3. Annual Reports to Conference. --1969-1989, 1996, 1998. -- 21 volumes.

Items described here consist of the annual reports of Conference agencies reporting to the annual meeting of Conference and are bound or filed separately from the Conference Records of Proceedings. These agencies included the Standing Committees of Conference, Special Committees and Commissions and the governing boards of Conference institutions such as camps and senior's residences. In some cases, these reports are more detailed than the version that appears in the published Records of Proceedings. In more recent years, these annual reports might be bound into a volume entitled the 'Conference Workbook' that also included the Conference agenda and research materials for Conference theme discussions and other Conference activities. Separately bound annual reports to Conference for 1974, 1979 and 1990 and onwards are currently not available.

Title based on contents.

Items for 1969-1973 have been signed by the Executive Secretary or labelled 'Conference Copy'.

Location: Box S-1-1; and Box 500/1-3.

500/1/2 Conference Annual Meeting Planning and Programming. -- 1964-1998. -- 1m textual records and other material.

This sub-series consists of items generated by the members of Conference responsible for the planning of the Conference Annual Meetings from 1964 to 1988 and other miscellaneous Annual Meeting related materials.

Title based on contents.

The sub-series includes approximately 150-200 unidentified slides labelled "AVEL Conference Slides".

Files arranged alphabetically by file title; order imposed by the archivist where necessary.

File level description; box lists available.

The 1971 *Report of the Special Committee to Evaluate the Style and Approach of the Annual Meeting* can be found in the Files of the Conference Secretary described as part of the Sub-Series '500/2/2 Records of the Conference Executive Officers'.

Accession: 1996-21.

Location: Box S-2-0 (CA0067); Box S-3-1; and Box 500/1-3.

File Description

1. Addresses to Annual Meetings. -- 1977, 1981. -- 1 folder and other material.

Items found in this folder include an audiocassette recording labelled "Manitoba Conference, of United Church of Canada, 1977, Tape to accompany slide report prepared by Rev Lorne W. Friesen", approximately 45 slides in a slide carousel and two copies of the presentation script. Items also include an Address by Rev. Earl M. Gould to the Annual Meeting of the Conference of Manitoba and Northwest Ontario in Thompson, Manitoba on 29-31 May 1981 titled "Land Use".

Title based on contents.

2. Conference for Women. -- 1979. -- 1 folder.

Items found here include a report on the first annual Conference for Women, held concurrently with the Conference Annual Meeting.

Title based on contents.

3. Conference Program Planning Committee. -- 1969-1983, predominant 1969-1972. -- 5 folders.

Generally, a Special Committee appointed by the Conference Executive was responsible for planning the Conference program and insuring the orderly registration of delegates. Items found here consist of documents generated by the various Conference committees responsible for planning the Annual Meeting. Items dating from 1970-1972 were created or collected together by Bruce W. Gunn, Field Secretary, Division of Congregational Life and Work.

For 1970, the year with the most complete record, items include: summaries of evaluations, delegates and facilities; copies of speeches and presentations; orders of service; agenda building sheets and agendas; correspondence; AV resource lists; copies of committee resolutions; conference brochure; committee minutes and reports; and copies of private member's bills. For most years the surviving record largely consists of minutes and correspondence.

Title taken from folder labels.

No annual meeting was held in 1975.

Duplicates and hand-written rough drafts have been culled from all folders; delegate registration forms and lists of delegates compiled by William Hickerson as part of the delegate registration process for 1981 have been culled.

4. Annual Meeting Evaluation. -- 1974. -- 1 folder.

Items found here consist of the collected responses to the Evaluation Survey for the 1974 Annual Meeting of Conference.

Title based on contents.

5. Memorials and Petitions to General Council. -- 1980, 1988. -- 2 folders + 1 acco-bound publisher's galley.

Memorials and petitions sent forward from the lower courts of the church (Presbyteries) are considered by the members of Conference at the Conference Annual Meeting prior to a decision being made as to forwarding the petitions forward for consideration by the United Church General Council.

Items found here include "Land Use in Canada: A Study Prepared for Manitoba Conference", which was prepared as background information concerning the petition to General Council titled "A Land Use Policy for Canada". This petition was considered at the Conference Annual Meeting of June 1980. Also found here are two copies of the various petitions dealing with the report "Toward a Christian Understanding of Sexual Orientation, Lifestyle and Ministry" which were forwarded to General Council by the Conference Annual Meeting of June 1988. One loose copy indicates Presbytery concurrence/non-concurrence and the other is a publisher's galley.

Title based on contents.

The label on the acco-bound publisher's galley reads: "Petitions Dealing With The Report 'TOWARD A CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION, LIFESTYLES AND MINISTRY' At The 1988 Annual Meeting of Conference - Omnibus Petitions A-1 - Original Petitions 1-140 (Note: No Petitions 46-54,63, 126-129, 132)".

A photocopied triplicate copy of petitions dealing with the report "Toward a Christian Understanding of Sexual Orientation, Lifestyle and Ministry" has been culled.

For related materials see the records of the Conference Co-ordinating Group for the Study of Sexuality, Lifestyles and Ministry described as part of the Series '501/1 Committees, Task Forces and Working Groups Answering to the Executive and Sub-Executive and Special Committees'.

6. Slides. – [ca.1970]. – ca.150-200 slides.

Consists of approximately 150-200 unidentified slides labelled “AVEL Conference Slides”.

Title based on contents.

7. Special Conference Annual Meeting Review Committee. -- 1971. -- 1 folder.

Items found here include materials that pertain to an evaluative study of the Conference annual meetings and the annual meeting planning process. Comments of past Conference presidents on previous annual meetings are included.

Title based on contents.

8. Pamphlets and Handouts. -- 1985-1998. -- 3 folders.

Items found here include theme and program materials as well as Conference circulars and other information produced for Conference Annual Meeting participants. This also includes Public Worship programs.

Title based on contents.

Minutes of the Conference Executive and Sub-Executive Committees. --1926-1993. -- 50cm textual records.

The full Conference Executive Committee has seldom met more than twice a year. A smaller Sub-Executive is also appointed that meets more often and which has the power to act on behalf of the Executive. Beginning in 1974, a Digest of the Minutes of Conference Executive and Sub-Executive Committee meetings has been included in the published Records of Proceedings as part of the report of the Conference Executive and Sub-Executive to the Conference Annual Meeting.

Title based on contents.

Minutes for May 1926 - September 1961 are signed and/or initialled by Executive officers.

Minutes of the Executive and Sub-Executive dating from January 1962 to June 1963 have not been located. Accession records indicate that Minutes of Conference Executive and Sub-Executive Committee for the period from 1975 to 1985 were discarded when these records were accessioned in 1985 in the belief that the Digest of Minutes appearing in the Record of Proceedings was sufficiently complete.

Copies have been retained where originals do not appear to be present.

File level description; box lists available.

Accession: 1984-42; 1985-2; 1996-21; and others.

Location: Box 500/1-3.

File Description

1. Minutes of the Conference Executive and Sub-Executive Committees. – 1926-1944. – 1 folder.
Title is based on contents.
2. Minutes of the Conference Executive and Sub-Executive Committees. – 1944-1961. – 1 folder.
Title is based on contents.
3. Minutes of the Conference Executive and Sub-Executive Committees. – 1961-1969. – 1 folder.
Title is based on contents.
4. Minutes of the Conference Executive and Sub-Executive Committees. – 1970-1974. – 1 folder.
Title is based on contents.
5. Minutes of the Conference Executive and Sub-Executive Committees. – 1985-1993. – 1 folder.
Title is based on contents.

Box Lists

Box 500/1-1

Records of Conference Annual Meetings

- Minutes of Conference Annual Meetings. -- 1927-1956. -- 5 volumes.

Box 500/1-2

Records of Conference Annual Meetings

- Minutes of Conference Annual Meetings. -- 1957-1990. -- 25 volumes.
- Minutes of Sessions. --1972, 1974. -- 2 folders.

Box 500/1-3

Records of Conference Annual Meetings

- Minutes of Conference Annual Meetings. -- 1991-1998. -- 2 volumes.

Box S-1-1

Annual reports to Conference. --1969-1989. -- 19 volumes.

Box S-2-0 (now Box CA0067)

Conference Annual Meeting Planning and Programming Files

- Addresses to Annual Meetings. -- 1977, 1981. -- 1 folder.
- Conference for Women. -- 1979. -- 1 folder.
- Conference Program Planning Committee. -- 1969-1983; predominant 1969-1972. -- 5 folders.
- Evaluation, Annual Meeting. -- 1974. -- 1 folder.
- Memorials and Petitions to General Council. -- 1980, 1988. -- 2 folders + 1 acco bound publisher's galley.
- Special Conference Annual Meeting Review Committee. -- 1971. -- 1 folder.

Box S-3-1 (CA0109)

Conference Annual Meeting Planning and Programming Files

Addresses to Annual Meetings. -- 1977, 1981. -- other material;

Material includes an audio cassette recording labeled "Manitoba Conference of United Church of Canada, 1977; tape to accompany slide report prepared by Rev Lorne W. Friesen"; approximately 45 slides in a slide carousel and two copies of the presentation script.

Slides. -- date unknown. -- 1 box.

Includes approximately 100-200 unidentified slides labeled "AVEL Conference Slides".

-