

FINDING AID

Administrative Records of the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Fonds

Series 512/2

Evangelism and Social Action Council

- 512/2/1 Evangelism and Social Action Council
- 512/2/2 Committees and Portfolios Reporting to the Evangelism and Social Action Council
- 512/2/3 Evangelism and Social Action Council [Inter-Council] Communications Committee

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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.

512/2 Evangelism and Social Action Council. – 1983-1993. -- .4m textual records and other material.

From 1983 to 1993, responsibility for the social action initiatives of Conference was in the hands of the Evangelism and Social Action Council, the purpose of which was to stimulate Christian reflection and action on social issues and evangelism. Tasks of the Council included mission interpretation (including the co-ordination of travel for mission visitors within the Conference), encouraging evangelism through workshops and training as well as through media relations, liaison with the United Church Women Supply Co-ordinator, liaison with General Council in areas of communication such as "Cross-Currents", and focus attention on social concerns and justice issues within Conference. Committees, sometimes called portfolios, acting in these areas reported to the Conference through the Council. At various times these included the Farm Economy Task Group, the Local Justice Issues interest group, the Government Brief Committee, Mission Interpretation, Institutional Chaplaincies and the Women's Justice Committee as well as the Media Resource Committee (which made its appearance in 1985). Conference representatives to Inter-Conference and Inter-Church organisations such as the Interfaith Immigration Committee, Ten Days for World Development and the Manitoba Interfaith Council also reported to Conference through this Council. Following the 1993 Conference Annual Meeting, changes to the Conference structure saw many of the social justice responsibilities of the Evangelism and Social Action Council assumed by the newly created Education and Justice Unit. Other responsibilities related to areas such as global concerns and Inter-Conference and Ecumenical groups were assumed by the Stewardship and Mission Unit. Chairs of the Council included Rev. Earl M. Gould, 1983-1984; Paul N. Duval, 1984-1985; Rev. Alan Hall, 1985-1986; Carol Unruh, 1986-1989; Garry Loewen, 1989-1992; and Pat Wotton, 1992-1993.

The surviving records of the Evangelism and Social Action Council appear to have been primarily created or acquired by Conference Christian Development and Outreach/Christian Development Staff Ted Dodd and Evangelism and Social Action Staff Janet Silman. Materials for the Evangelism and Social Action Council were in an extremely disorganised state when acquired by the Conference Archives in 1996 as part of an accession of records that had been stored in the basement of the Conference Offices at 120 Maryland. With no original order or access points apparent, the arranging archivist imposed order based on administrative function. There are large gaps in this record and items have yet to be located for many of the initiatives reporting to Conference through the Evangelism and Social Action Committee.

This series consist of the following sub-series: records of the Evangelism and Social Action Council, 1983-1993; records of Committees and Portfolios reporting to the Evangelism and Social Action Council, 1983-1993; and records of the Evangelism and Social Action Council [Inter-Council] Communication Committee, 1989-1992.

Title based on contents.

Items have been re-folded.

Rough drafts of reports and meeting notes have been retained where the originals do not appear to be present; agendas have been retained where minutes do not appear to be present; blank forms, duplicates, expense sheets, research and background materials not produced by the Conference were culled when these records were arranged and described.

File level description; box list available.

For records of Inter-Conference and Ecumenical Groups reporting to Conference through the Evangelism and Social Action Council see the series "513/3 Evangelism and Social Action Inter-Conference and Ecumenical Groups".

Annual Reports of initiatives reporting to Conference through the Evangelism and Social Action Council were usually reproduced or excerpted in the annual Conference Record of Proceedings.

Accession: 96-21.

512/2/1 Records of the Evangelism and Social Action Council. – 1983-1993. – 7 folders.

Records of the Evangelism and Social Action Council described here consist of the minutes of the Council and the Council Executive, Council correspondence, and the surviving records of Evangelism and Social Action Council special projects and campaigns.

Title based on contents.

File level description; box list available.

Location: Box 512/1-1.

File Description

1. Minutes. -- 1983-1993. -- 2 folders.

Items found here include minutes of meetings (including appendices) of the Evangelism and Social Action Council dating from September 1983 and minutes of meetings of the Council Executive dating from September 1984. Also found here are lists of members, job descriptions, memos from the Chair, reports by and for the Council and background materials such as lists of resources for the study of issues of concern to the Council and resource materials prepared by the Council explaining their work.

Title based on contents.

2. Correspondence. -- 1984-1992. -- 1 folder.

Items found here include correspondence of the committee such as circular letters to members of Council as well as letters to MPs and MLAs and correspondence sent and received by Conference Social Action Staff Janet Silman

Title based on contents.

Reverse chronological order.

3. Special Projects and Campaigns. -- 1987-1991. -- 4 folders.

Items described here include the surviving records for some of the special projects and campaigns of the Evangelism and Social Action Council. These include the Nuclear Power Study Kit, ca. 1987; the Rural/Urban Twinning Event, ca.1987-1988; 'Visions of the New Community' Workshop Manual, 1988; and the Gulf War Campaign Mailings, ca.1991.

Title based on contents.

512/2/2 Records of Committees and Portfolios Reporting to the Evangelism and Social Action Council. -- 1983-1993. -- 15 folders.

Items described here include the surviving records of portfolios and committees reporting to the Evangelism and Social Action Council. These include items pertaining to the Farm Economy Task Group, 1987-1991; records of the Local Justice Issues portfolio, 1983-1987; records of the Government Brief Committee, 1987-1993; records of the Mission Interpretation portfolio, 1983-1990; and records of the Women's Justice Committee, 1988-1993.

Title based on contents.

File level description; box list available.

Location: Box 512/1-1.

File Description

1. Farm Economy Task Group. – 1987-1991. – 6 folders textual records and other material.

The Farm Economy Task Group was formed in the Brandon Presbytery region in 1988 by the Evangelism and Social Action Council. Its purpose was to provide the Council with direction in matters involving the farm economy. The main project for which the Farm Economy Task Group secured funding was the Melita Rural Life Support Group. This group produced the "Where the Rose Grows" Video and Workshop Guide as well as the "In Land We Trust" Broadsheet. Other projects of the Farm Economy Task Group for which items are found here include "Stewards of the Land", the Ellice Trail Land Trust, the Inter-Church Rural Support Group and the Ecumenical Ministry to Agriculture. Also found here are Janet Silman's records pertaining to the Economic Animation Project Proposal including copies of the original proposal and correspondence.

The records of the Farm Economy Task Group described here have been assembled from the files of Donna Kennedy and from the files of Janet Silman. Although these files were in a somewhat disorganised state an attempt has been made to maintain original order. Donna Kennedy's hand-written notes regarding meetings and telephone conversations have been retained. Items include minutes and meeting notes, correspondence, and project files.

Title based on contents.

The Inter-Church Rural Support Group was the original name for the Ecumenical Support Group to the Ellice Trail Land Trust also called the Rural Crisis Task Force.

Items include a 34 minute video tape of the Melita Rural Theatre Group production "Where the Rose Grows" with accompanying workshop guide, introduction and workshop program.

See the minutes of the Evangelism and Social Action Council for periodic reports of the Farm Economy Task Group.

2. Government Brief Committee. – 1987-1993. – 2 folders.

The Government Brief Committee of the Evangelism and Social Action Council was responsible for producing research documents and briefs on important social justice issues of Conference wide concern that the Conference wished to have brought before the Government of Manitoba. It appears that between 1983 and 1987, the responsibility of producing Conference briefs rested with Local Justice Issues Portfolio (see below). The first Chair of the Government Brief Committee was Rev. Doug Martindale.

Items found here include correspondence, reports, and submissions to the Brief Committee. Also found here are copies of briefs and other submissions to the Government of Manitoba and other party caucuses of the Manitoba Legislature along with meeting notes and evaluations. This includes submissions to the Environment Assessment Panel concerning Nuclear Fuel Waste Management and a submission to the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry.

Title based on contents.

Duplicates, agendas and copies of briefs from other jurisdictions were culled when these files were arranged and described; draft copies of correspondence, minutes and reports have been retained when no other copy appeared to be present.

For items pertaining to Conference Briefs produced and presented prior to 1983 see the records described as part of the series "512/1 Church in Society Committee".

3. Local Justice Issues. – 1983-1992. – 3 folders.

Under the Evangelism and Social Action Council, the Local Justice Issues Portfolio was responsible for researching and bringing before Conference important issues of social justice. From 1983 to 1987, these tasks were accomplished through the sole efforts of a convenor. In 1988, a Local Justice Issues Committee with a membership of three was struck. The first Conference Convenor for Social Concerns and Justice was Eric Snider of Emmanuel United Church in Ignace, Ontario.

Items include the convenor's correspondence dating from 1983 and 1984, briefs and presentations dating from 1986 and 1987, and correspondence dating from 1991 to 1992 pertaining to the Oka Crisis and the Aboriginal Support Network.

Title based on contents.

Reverse chronological order.

4. Mission Interpretation. – 1983-1990. – 1 folder.

The Mission Interpretation Portfolio was largely responsible for education about and interpretation of the mission activities of the United Church to its members. Items consist of correspondence and other documents pertaining to mission interpretation within the Conference including travel arrangements and itineraries for missionary tours.

Title based on contents.

Lists of overseas missionaries, missionary profiles, country profiles, a Division of Mission "Mission Interpretation Guide", expense summaries and Division of Mission mailings were culled from this file during arrangement and description.

5. Women's Justice Committee. -- 1988-1993. – 3 folders.

The mandate of the women's portfolio under the Evangelism and Social Action Council included research of justice issues related to women, liaison with other women's concerns groups within and outside of Conference, lobbying, and creating opportunities for education. The Women's Justice Committee also related to the Conference Committee of Women's Ministries, an umbrella group responsible for co-ordinating women's concerns within the Conference.

Items found here include minutes of the committee, October 1989 to February 1993; correspondence, 1988-1992; and a copy of the report "Contraceptive and Abortion Services in Manitoba" created in response to Petition No. 197 of the 33rd General Council.

Title based on contents.

**512/2/3 Evangelism and Social Action Council [Inter-Council] Communications Committee. --
1989- 1992. -- 2cm textual records.**

From 1989 to 1992, the Inter-Council Communications Committee, which had previously operated outside the Council structure, came under the umbrella of the Evangelism and Social Action Council. Some Communications activities such as the AVEL Advisory Committee remained under the supervision of the Worship and Education Council. This Communications Committee seems to have been primarily concerned with questions of Conference policy as it related to all communications issues. Following Conference restructuring in 1993, Conference Communications came under the umbrella of the Education and Justice Unit.

Items described here include minutes, 1989-1992; and items pertaining to CRTC Winnipeg Hearings on Religious Broadcasting, October 1992.

Title based on contents.

Copies of Canadian Federal Broadcasting Acts, CRTC Notices of Public Hearings, research materials from Statistics Canada, United Church General Council Submissions to the CRTC and copies of Vision TV policies were discarded when these items were accessioned in 1996.

File level description.

Location: Box 515/1-1 (former S-3-0).

File Description

1. Minutes. -- 1989-1992. -- 1 folder.

Title based on contents.

Reverse chronological order.

2. CRTC Hearing on Religious Broadcasting Policy. -- 1992. -- 1 folder.

The United Church policy for religious broadcasting advocated balance in religious programming rather than single faith cable channels. Items found here include correspondence and other items pertaining to the Manitoba Conference presentation to the Canadian Radio and Television Commission concerning the future of religious broadcasting including a copy of the text of the Conference's oral presentation.

This file contains items that appear to have been created by Nancy Painter, Conference Communication Resource Staff.

Title based on contents.

Box Lists

Box 512/1-1 (Formerly Box S-7-0 CA0081)

Records of the Evangelism and Social Action Council

- Minutes. -- 1983-1993. -- 2 folders.
- Correspondence. -- 1984-1992. -- 1 folder.
- Special Projects and Campaigns. -- 1987-1991. -- 4 folders.

Records of Committees and Portfolios Reporting to the Evangelism and Social Action Council

- Farm Economy Task Group. – 1987-1991. – 6 folders textual records and other material.
- Government Brief Committee. – 1987-1993. – 2 folders.
- Local Justice Issues. – 1983-1992. – 3 folders.
- Mission Interpretation. – 1983-1990. – 1 folder.
- Women's Justice Committee. -- 1988-1993. – 3 folders.
- Division of World Outreach Briefs to the Provincial Government 1980-1981. -- 1 folder.

Box 515/1-1 (Formerly Box S-3-0)

Evangelism and Social Action Council Communications Committees.

Minutes. -- 1989-1992. -- 1 folder.

CRTC Hearing on Religious Broadcasting Policy. -- 1992. -- 1 folder.