

FINDING AID

Administrative Records of the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Fonds

Series 517/1

Committee on Education, Students and Church Vocations

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United Church of Canada Archives
Winnipeg

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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.

1 Committee on Education, Students and Church Vocations. -- 1969-1982. -- 7 folders.

One of the main duties of Conference was to examine and ordain candidates for the order of ministry who have fulfilled the prescribed requirements and have been recommended by the Presbyteries. The Conference Committee on Education and Students, in existence under various names from 1925, had the responsibility of carrying out the final inquiries into the fitness and the examination of recommended candidates. Initially, this committee met and conducted their examinations immediately prior to the Conference annual meeting. During the 1970s, the committee began arranging their examinations as a two-day live-in retreat with prospective candidates that took place many weeks before the Conference annual meeting. Following Conference restructuring in 1983, this committee came under the umbrella of the Ministry and Personnel Council.

Some items described here (located in 518-1) were acquired by the Conference archives in 1996 as part of a larger accession of administrative materials that had been stored in the basement of the Conference offices at 120 Maryland. The creator of these records is uncertain; however, it appears that they may have been acquired by William Hickerson, Conference Executive Secretary from 1976 to 1984. Additional records (located in the on-site "Education and Student's Committee: Manitoba Conference Secretary's File" box) were found amongst miscellaneous unaccessioned records held at the archives and dealt with in 2012. These records are indicated as being part of a "Secretary's File," and thus could also have been acquired by William Hickerson.

The items described as part of this series cover the period from 1969 to 1982. Items described here include minutes of meetings of the Conference Committee on Education, Students and Church Vocations as well as some items of committee correspondence and meeting notices. Correspondence dating from 1976 deals with plans for the implementation of a new Conference internship program. Reports and guidelines deal with the nature of the ordination training program and proposed changes to the ordination process. Standardized forms, self-evaluations, recommendations for ministry and other material relates to various ordination candidates, their education and their summer internships. Other items deal with planning for the annual committee retreat. Although the Committee on Education and Students has been continually in existence for the life of the Conference, records for this committee for the years prior to 1969 have not been accessioned by this archives.

Related documentation generated by the Tri-College Consultation is also included in the series. The Tri-College Consultation was convened to examine the possibility of educational cooperation between the University of Winnipeg's Faculty of Theology, St. Andrew's College and St. Stephen's College, particularly regarding training for ordination, graduate programs and continuing education. It was suggested that the Conference Committees on Education and Students from Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan Conferences appoint one individual each to serve on the Consultation's Pre-Ordination Education Working Group. Items pertaining to the Tri-College Consultation include a 1976 Summary Report as well as correspondence and nomination information generated by the Continuing Education Committee in 1977.

Title based on contents.

Box lists available.

For information on education programs designed specifically for the purpose of preparing First Nations students for ordination see the records of the Indian Advisory Council described as part of the series "501/1 Committees, Task Forces and Working Groups ...and Special Committees of Conference"; see also the records of the Project for the Development of Church School Curricula and Training Programs for Indians in Manitoba Conference described as part of the series "511/1 Conference Congregational Life and Work".

Items pertaining to the Conference Committee on Education and students prior to 1975 have been accessioned by the University of Winnipeg Archives as part of the personal files of Dr. Riddell (UofW Accession WC-11-1).

Accession: 1996-21. Other material does not appear to be accessioned.

Location: Box 518-1 (former Box S-5-0), "Education and Students Committee: Manitoba Conference Secretary's File" onsite box.

Box List

Box 518-1 (Former Box S-5-0) Records pertaining to Education and Students

- Committee on Education, Students and Church Vocations. -- 1975-1978. -- 1 folder.
- Continuing Education Committee. -- 1972-1983. -- 1 folder.
- [Interim] Placement Committee. -- 1970-1972. -- 1 folder.