

# FINDING AID

## Administrative Records of the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Fonds

### Series 518/2 Conference Staff Committee

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

United Church of Canada Archives  
Winnipeg

[uccarchiveswinnipeg.ca](http://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.

**518/2 Conference Staff Committees. – 1966-1992, predominant 1966-1983. – 3 folders.**

The Conference Staff Committee was established in 1970 (Record of Proceedings, 1971, p.126) as per the recommendation of the General Council Executive following the administrative reorganisation of The United Church General Council and the subsequent review of Conference Field Services. The committee was concerned with the supervision of the soon to be created Conference field staff positions of Executive Secretary, Personnel and Administrative Support as well as other staff positions that would be added later. Following the installation of the Council system in 1983, the Staff Committee, by then called the Staff Advisory Committee, was briefly placed under the umbrella of the Conference Ministry and Personnel Council. However, by 1985 the Staff Advisory Committee was again reporting directly to the Conference Executive. This arrangement continued after further Conference restructuring in 1993. The Conference Staff Committee was conceived as having five to seven members, one of whom should be a Conference representative to the General Council Executive. The Executive Secretary was to be a corresponding member. The Staff Committee met at least three times a year. From time to time special staff committees, task forces and forums were constituted for specific tasks such as employee searches and interviews, staff needs assessments, and defining Conference staff assignments.

Items described here 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 this record is uncertain. However, some of the items described here appear to have been created or acquired by Rev. E. P. Johnston, Executive Secretary of Conference from 1970 to 1975.

The surviving record for these committees is incomplete and large gaps exist in the record. Items found here include materials pertaining to the Conference Staff Committee dating from 1966 to 1983; the Conference Staff Advisory Committee dating from 1991 to 1992; several Special Staff Committees dating from 1985 to 1992; and staff meeting minutes dating from 1976 to 1992.

Title based on contents.

Access restricted; records pertaining to the employment of Ministry Personnel and Conference Staff normally may not be consulted until one hundred years (100) after the birth of the individual concerned except by that individual or with his/her written permission.

File level description; box list available.

Accession: 1996-21.

Location: Box 518-1 (former Box S-5-0).

**File Description**

**1. Conference Staff Committee. -- 1966-1977. -- 1 folder.**

Items found here consist of materials pertaining to various Conference field services and staff deployment studies, some of which were conducted by the Conference Staff Committee. This includes correspondence, surveys and reports as well as job descriptions and terms of reference.

Title based on contents.

Items culled from this record on accession include duplicates, Reports of the General Council Field Staff Study Committee dating from February to April 1970, and copies of minutes of meetings of the Conference Executive and Sub-Executive.

**2. Minutes. -- 1975-1983. -- 1 folder.**

Items described here consist of minutes of meetings of the Conference Staff Committee dating from November 1975 to January 1983. It has not been determined if this is a complete set of minutes for this committee.

Title based on contents.

**3. Staff Advisory Committee. - 1991-1992. -- 2 folders.**

Items found here include minutes of meetings of the Staff Advisory Committee dating from 1992, job descriptions for several Conference staff positions dating from 1992, draft terms of reference for the Staff Advisory Committee dating from 1992, and Staff Advisory Committee memos.

Title based on contents.

**4. Special Staff Committees. -- 1985-1992. -- 1 folder.**

From time to time, special committees and task forces were created in response to particular staffing concerns. These committees existed for a limited period of time and reported directly to the Conference Executive. These included the Staff Assignments Forum taking place in June 1985, which was concerned with the deployment of Conference staff time on the work of the Conference Executive, Councils, and Presbyteries; the Staffing Task Force meeting in 1986, which recommended the hiring of additional Conference staff to support the work of the Evangelism and Social Action Council; the Mutual Supervision Working Group meeting in 1991, which was concerned with the development of a model of peer supervision for Conference staff; and the Search Committee meeting in 1992, which was charged with conducting searches for Stewardship Education and Evangelism and Social Action Council staff.

Items found here include notes from a meeting of the Staff Assignments Forum dating from 14 June 1985; the Report of the Staffing Task Force dating from 27 March 1986; notes from a meeting of the Mutual Supervision Working Group dating from 3 June 1991; and notes from meetings of the Search Committee dating from May and June 1992.

Title based on contents.

5. Staff Meeting Minutes. -- 1976-1992. -- 2 folders.

All Conference staff, including support staff, attended regular staff meetings. Items described here include minutes, including reports and proposals, from those meetings dating from 1976 to 1992.

Title based on contents.

Reverse chronological order.

**Box List**

**Box 518-1 (Former Box S-5-0)  
Records Pertaining to Conference Staff**

Conference Staff Committees. – 1966-1992, predominant 1966-1983. – 7 folders.

Includes:

Conference Staff Committee. -- 1966-1977. -- 1 folder.

Minutes. -- 1975-1983. -- 1 folder.

Staff Advisory Committee. - 1991-1992. -- 2 folders.

Special Staff Committees. -- 1985-1992. -- 1 folder.

Staff Meeting Minutes. -- 1976-1992. -- 2 folders