

FINDING AID

Administrative Records of the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Fonds

Series 519/1 Conference Finance 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; Evangelism and Social Action Council, 1983-1993; Inter-Conference and Ecumenical Groups reporting to the Evangelism 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.

519/1 Records of the Conference Finance Committee. -- 1964-1974. -- 10cm textual records.

A Conference Finance Committee was created soon after the inception of Conference in 1925. Membership consisted of the Treasurers of the Presbyteries and the Conference Treasurer as well as two others. The committee was charged with administering the payment of the expenses of the Conference annual meeting (the Conference Fund), the expenses of Conference officers and the expenses of Conference Committees (not otherwise provided for). Some Conference Committees such as Religious Education and Home Missions administered their own finances. However, their allocation was moved by the Finance Committee and voted at Conference. The Conference Finance Committee also came to be responsible for administering the expenses of the Conference offices. Other Conference endeavours, such as Home and Institutional Missions, were funded through the Unified Plan of Finance (also called the Unified Budget) and the national Boards of the Church approved projects so funded.

By the 1940s, Conference and Presbyteries had begun to initiate projects without the authorisation of General Council and finance them through direct assessments and appeals to congregations. This was seen to undermine a uniform standard of work across the Church and the Finance Committee moved to exert more control over steadily increasing Conference expenditures. Tension between regional and national control of expenditures continued and in 1968 a Conference Memorial went forward from Northland Presbytery proposing decentralised administration of a portion of the Unified Budget in order that Conference could be more responsive to local concerns. A system of Block Funding, whereby spending priorities were set regionally, was proposed in 1972 and adopted soon after.

In 1972, a Special Committee to Study the Conference Financial Administration recommended that the administrative and financial arrangements of the Conference Executive Secretary, Congregational Life and Work, Home Missions and Stewardship be consolidated. Funds provided for field staff also were received into and paid from consolidated accounts. The Book Store, AV Centre and Regional Director of Broadcasting continued to maintain separate administrative arrangements. Under this new financial structure, the Administrative Work Group of Congregational Life and Work administered a large part of the Conference budget until 1973. The Administration/Finance Arm of the short-lived Congregational Support Committee then assumed this task. In 1974, the decision was made to concentrate all financial policy and administration under a Conference Finance Committee, thereafter to be called the Administrative Support Committee.

The Conference Archives acquired the Finance Committee files described here in 1984 as part of an accession of records attributed to the Conference Executive. However, items had been re-folded and the exact identity of the creator and the circumstances of their creation are unclear. The whereabouts of Finance Committee records created prior to 1963 has not yet been ascertained.

Title is based on contents.

File level description; box lists available.

For Manitoba Conference Financial Statements dating from 1963 to 1973 see the file "Financial Statements" described as part of the sub-series "519/2/2 Administrative Support Committee".

For records of the Conference Finance Committee that pertain to the awarding of Conference Equalisation Grants from 1966 to 1971 see the file "Funding Requests" described as part of the sub-series "519/2/2 Administrative Support Committee".

Accession: 1984-42; and others.

File Description

1. Finance Committee Files. -- 1964-1974. -- 4 folders.

Items described here include Finance Committee minutes dating from 1966, financial statements and other reports of the committee as well as circular letters and blank forms pertaining to financial reporting. Correspondence of the Executive Assistant to the Conference Secretary as well as correspondence generated by Fred C. Hubbard, the Conference Secretary from 1965-1968, is interspersed throughout. Also found here is Treasurer's correspondence dating from 1971. Rev. Ray Smith, Conference Administrative Support staff from 1972 to 1979, primarily created those items dating from 1972 to 1974.

Title based on contents.

Location: Box 519/2-1 (former Conference Executive/Temporary Box I).

2. Finance Committee Files. -- 1971-1973. -- 1 folder.

Items described here include minutes of the Finance Committee dating from 1971. Also found here are reports and circular letters. Treasurer's correspondence dating from 1971 to 1973 is interspersed throughout.

Title based on contents.

Location: Box 500/3-1.

Box Lists

Box 500/3-1

Records of the Conference Finance Committee

- Finance Committee Files. -- 1971-1973. -- 1 folder.

Box 519/2-1 (former Temporary Box I)

Records of the Conference Finance Committee

- Finance Committee Files. -- 1964-1974. -- 4 folders.