

FINDING AID

Administrative Records of the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Fonds

Series 524/1 Conference United Church Women

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United Church of Canada Archives
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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.

524/1 Records of the Conference United Church Women. -- 1963-2002, predominant 1963-1969. – 1.2m textual material.

Beginning in 1953, a General Council Committee began to study the relationship of the various United Church women's organisations to one another and to the church as a whole. It was the recommendation of the Committee that the General Council of the United Church approve the formation of one organisation for all women of the Church at all levels. By 1960, a constitution for the new women's organisation had been prepared and it was approved at the 19th General Council. The new group would be known as The United Church Women (UCW). Manitoba Conference UCW came into being on March 7, 1962. The Conference UCW took over many of the responsibilities of older women's organisations such as the Woman's Association and the Woman's Missionary Society that were disbanded when the UCW came into being. Representatives of Conference UCW were mandated to serve on the Conference Committees of Literature Depot, Christian Education, Missionary and Maintenance, Evangelism and Social Service, Home Missions, and World Service. Soon UCW representatives would also be serving on the Conference Executive and the Colleges and Students and Communications Committees.

Support for the Christian Education initiatives of the United Church was considered to be a special responsibility of UCW. However, as is shown by the number of Conference UCW Committees and Portfolios, they were also involved in many other projects. Members of Conference UCW co-ordinated the opening reception of the new Conference offices at 120 Maryland in 1965. Conference UCW undertook to raise funds for a two-way radio network for Indian missions, which at that time had no telephone service. Responsibility for the Woman's Association Bursary Fund, which provided financial assistance to those training for work in the Church, was assumed by Conference UCW. The UCW Supply Committee was active in collecting and shipping needed material goods to isolated First Nations Communities. These projects were made possible through the financial and material support of hundreds of congregational UCW groups.

It was also decided in 1962 to create a joint Committee of United Church Men and United Church Women, called the Co-ordinating Committee for Lay Activities, which would assume the responsibilities previously delegated to the Lay Association of Conference as outlined in the United Church Manual. In 1966, following the lead of the United Church General Council, the Conference began to move towards the amalgamation of Evangelism and Social Service, Christian Education, United Church Men and United Church Women under the one administrative structure of Congregational Life and Work. In 1967, Congregational Life and Work took over the administrative responsibilities of the Conference Co-ordinating Committee for Lay Activities. In 1969 the UCW and UCM ceased to exist as separate groups at the Conference level. The main unit of organisation became the Presbytery with Presbyterial UCW relating to the Congregational Life and Work Committee and Manitoba Conference United Church Women entered a period of hiatus. Responsibilities such as the Bursary Fund and the Two-Way Radio Program came under the supervision of Congregational Life and Work (which ceased to exist in 1973) and its successor, the Administrative Support Committee. Supply work continued to be co-ordinated at the Conference level and the committee reported directly to Conference until 1993.

Unlike the members of other Conference Committees, Commissions and Task Forces the Executive officers of Conference and Presbyterial/Presbytery UCW were elected to their

positions. The President was elected for a two-year term. Officers of Conference UCW consisted of the President, the First Vice-President and five other Vice-Presidents, the Recording and Corresponding Secretaries and the Treasurer. The Executive Committee of Conference UCW would consist of these officers plus the Chairs of Standing Committees (Bursary, Christian Citizenship and Social Action, Co-operation in Christian Education & Missionary Education, Finance, Leadership Development, Nominations and Policy and Resolutions), Portfolio Secretaries (Archives, Community Friendship and Visiting, Literature and Communications, Organisation and Promotion, Press and Publicity, Programme, Stewardship and Recruiting, Supply and Social Assistance), the Immediate Past-President of Conference UCW and Presidents of each Presbyterian UCW within Conference. This structure remained essentially unchanged until 1969.

Over time the women of Conference UCW groups felt the absence of a Conference level organisation through which they could relate to each other and to the national church. In 1982, a UCW Co-ordinating Team was formed with one of its mandates being to act as a liaison between the National Church and United Church Women at the Presbytery level. The Co-ordinating Team began its work of re-creating a Conference level organisation by making contact with the Presbyteries and encouraging them to make reports to Conference. Eventually, one representative from each Presbytery would serve on the Co-ordinating Committee. With Conference re-organisation in 1983, the UCW Co-ordinating Committee came under the umbrella of the newly created Worship and Education Council. A second Conference re-organisation in 1993 relocated the UCW Co-ordinating Committee under the Stewardship and Mission Unit. For the first time since the demise of Conference UCW in 1969, the position of Conference UCW President was filled in 1993. In 1996, a President and Executive was elected by a Steering Committee of Presbyterian UCW Presidents.

Presidents of Manitoba Conference United Church Women include Mrs. W. B. (Aileen) Doerksen, 1963-1964; Mrs. John (Eleanor) Paxton, 1965-1966; Mrs. H. E. (Helen) Roy, 1967-1968; Mrs. Norman C. H. (Margaret J.) Russell, 1969; Helen Sampson, 1993-1995; Evelyn Stoddart, 1996-1997; Jean Janick, 1998- 2000; Bobbie McPherson 2000 - 2003; and Lorna Barclay 2003 - 2005.

Provenance is unclear for these materials. Items accessioned in 1984 appear to be the records of the Conference UCW Treasurer from 1962 to 1969. Clipsheets and pamphlets were accessioned as part of a larger collection of materials pertaining to Conference women's groups brought to the Archives in 1988 by Miss Laura Long, a long time member of those groups. Items accessioned in 1991, including Directories and Clipsheets, came to the Conference Archives as part of a collection of materials from Crescent-Fort Rouge United Church and were included among the congregational materials. Some Directories and the reports to UCW Annual Meetings were included in the collection of materials pertaining to Conference Administration accessioned in 1996 and 2006.

Surviving records described as part of this series include United Church Women Constitution and By-laws, 1961-1967; records pertaining to the Inaugural meeting of Conference UCW, 1962; Annual Reports to the Annual Meeting, 1963-1969; UCW Reports to Conference, 1965-1975; Newsletters 1998 - 2002; UCW Directories, 1963/64-1972/73; President's Reports and Correspondence, 1963-1969; Treasurer's Correspondence, 1962-1969; Finance Committee

Minutes, 1961-1968; records of the Bursary Committee, 1962-1967; Financial Statements, 1962-1968; Financial Ledgers, 1962-1975; Unified Budget Fund Scrapbook, 1962-1968; Sundry Reports, 1965-1968; Presbytery Report Forms, 1967; Pamphlets and Programs, [ca.1950-1982]; Clipsheets, 1962-1972; and Study resources, [ca.1960-1970]. Minutes of Conference UCW Annual Meetings do not appear among these items and they have yet to be accessioned by the Archives.

Documentation Digitization

Relevant items in this series related to Indian Residential Schools are included in the United Church of Canada Archives Winnipeg 2014 Index of IRS Related Records and were digitized for submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. For more information contact the Keeper of the Archives.

Title based on contents.

Dominion Council of the Woman's Association/The Dominion Woman's Association Council of The United Church of Canada 'Topics for Worship' pamphlets dated 1952-1957 accessioned with 1988-35 are now described and housed with the records of the Manitoba Conference Women's Association; a file of materials pertaining to the amalgamation of Winnipeg Presbyterial UCW with Presbytery Committee of Congregational Life & Work accessioned as part of 1991-25 are now housed with the records of Winnipeg Presbyterial UCW (WO7); duplicate copies of Reports to the UCW Annual Meetings for 1964/65, 1965/66, 1966/67, 1967/68, 1968/69 forming part of accession 1991-25 were culled.

File level description; box lists available.

For items pertaining to Presbyterial/Presbytery UCWs (for example, annual meeting and annual financial reports, various minutes and cashbooks) please see the Presbyterial/Presbytery UCW collections.

Accession: 1984-45; 1988-35; 1996-21;1991-25; 2006 - 12; 2006 - 22; 2006 - 28.

Location: Box 505/1-2; Box 505/1-4.

File Description

1. United Church Women Constitution and By-laws. -- 1961, 1966. – 1 folder.

Found here are the United Church Women constitution and by-laws handbooks issued in 1961 and 1966 by the Interim Board of Women and the Board of Women respectively.

Title based on contents.

2. Manitoba Council of United Church Women Constitution. – 1967. – 1 folder.

Items found here include a copy of the Manitoba Council of United Church Women Constitution as revised following the annual meeting of 14-16 March 1967.

Title based on contents.

3. Inaugural Meeting. – 1962. –1 folder.

Items found here pertain to the organisation of the inaugural meeting of the Manitoba Conference United Church Women on 7 March 1962. Also included here is a copy of the order of service issued by the General Council Interim Board of Women for the Inaugural Service of the UCW.

Title based on contents.

4. Annual Reports to the Annual Meeting. – 1963-1969. – 7 booklets.

These booklets contain the printed and bound copies of the annual reports presented at the annual meetings of the Conference United Church Women (UCW). Reports were received from the Conference UCW Executive; Committee Chairs; Portfolio Secretaries; the UCW representatives to the Manitoba Conference (Church Court) Committees of Home Missions Missionary and Maintenance and World Mission; and Presbyterial/Presbytery UCW presidents.

Title based on contents.

5. Reports. – 1965-1975. – 1 folder.

Items found here include the Annual Reports of the Conference United Church Women for 1964/65, 1966, and 1966/67. Also found here is a copy of Mrs. Kay Forsyth's Report of [the National] Lay Consultation, held at the Bolton Education Centre near Toronto 7-9 November 1979.

Title based on contents.

6. Directories. – 1963/64-1972/73. – 8 booklets.

These directories include the names and addresses of the Executive of Manitoba Conference United Church Women; Committee Chairs and members; Portfolio Secretaries; the UCW representatives to the Manitoba Conference (Church Court) Committees of Home Missions Missionary and Maintenance and World Mission; and Presbyterian UCW officers, committee chairs and portfolio secretaries as well as congregational presidents. Beginning in the 1970/71 directory, this information appears as part of the Directory of the Conference of Manitoba Congregational Life & Work Committee.

Title based on contents.

7. President's Reports and Correspondence. 1963-1969. – 1 folder.

The contents of this folder appear to have been collected by Presidents of Manitoba Conference United Church Women. Items include correspondence, circular letters, reports from various sources including other Conferences, and copies of the various reports created by the Conference UCW Presidents.

Title based on contents.

8. Treasurer's Correspondence. – 1962-1969. – 3 folders.

Items found here largely consist of correspondence, especially to and from Presbytery UCW Treasurers, but also include copies of Conference UCW Finance Committee minutes, various reports and circular letters.

Conference UCW financial officers included Mrs. E. M. McCullagh (1963-1964/65), Mrs. A. W. Miller (1964/65-1967/68) and M. Agnes Kennedy (1968/69).

Title based on contents.

9. Finance Committee Minutes. – 1961-1968. – 2 folders.

Items found here include minutes as well as correspondence, notices of meetings, agendas and various reports and statements.

Title based on contents.

10. Bursary Committee. – 1962-1973. – 2 folders.

In 1958 a Bursary Fund was created by the Manitoba Conference Women's Association in order to assist candidates pursuing education in order to take up employment in the Church. In 1961, the fund was turned over to the Conference UCW.

Items found here include minutes, correspondence and various reports pertaining to the Bursary Fund.

Title based on contents.

11. Financial Statements. – 1962-1968. – 1 folder.

Items found here include various financial statements as well as materials pertaining to Presbyterian allocations.

Title based on contents.

12. Financial Ledgers. – 1962-1975. – 2 volumes.

Contains summary entries documenting receipts and disbursements for Conference United Church Women (UCW) as well as the UCW Bursary Fund.

Title based on contents.

Several pages have been cut from the front of the ledger containing entries from 1962-1965.

13. Unified Budget Fund Scrapbook. 1962-1968. – 1 folder.

Items found here largely consist of background information on the Unified Budget Fund of The United Church of Canada collected from General Council mailings and pasted into a scrapbook.

Title based on contents.

14. Sundry Reports. – 1965-1968. – 7 folders.

Included here are various reports received by the Manitoba Conference UCW and others which were retained for information purposes. These include a folder on the Minaki Regional Conference for Women, 1965; the report on the field trip of Betty McColgan and Isobel Scurfield to Northland Presbyterial, 1966; the report on the Freeman slides, 1967; a folder on the the Manitoba Council of Women, 1968-1969; and Annual Reports of other conference UCWs, 1968-1969.

Title based on contents.

15. Presbytery Report Forms. – 1967. – 1 folder.

Items found here include sample copies of the annual report forms used by the Presbyteries of Carmen and Kenora Rainy-River when reporting to their Presbyterial UCW.

Title based on contents.

16. Pamphlets and Programs. – [ca.1950]-2007. – 3 folders.

These folders contain a number of pamphlets including the published 'Preliminary Draft of the Commission on the Work of Women in the Church'; three versions of the Constitution, By-Laws and Handbook for the United Church Women; various guidelines for organising UCW groups; the 'Mini-handbook: United Church Women in the 70's'; a pamphlet explaining the Fund to Honour Prairie Church Women, December 1982; and sample inaugural services for congregational and Presbyterial UCW. Also found here are various programs for Winnipeg Presbyterial as well as Manitoba and other Conference annual meetings.

Title based on contents.

17. Clipsheets. – 1962-1972. – 3 folders.

Items found here include issues of a broad sheet published by the national Board of Women and containing articles and program suggestions of interest to the membership of UCW. The 'Clip Sheet' was printed on only one side of the page to allow UCW leaders to clip out and distribute articles to UCW officers and chairmen.

Title based on contents.

18. Study Resources. – [ca.1960-1970]. – 1 folder.

Items found here include circulars detailing suggested resources for women's group programs, especially overseas mission study and also includes two copies of 'Partners on the Frontiers of Christian Community' as well as a "Morning Meditation for UCW Annual Meeting" dating from 1969 and a "Do You Know?" fact sheet.

Title based on contents.

19. Presbyterial Histories. – [ca.2002]. – 1 folder.

These folders contain material that was collected in order to document the histories of the Presbyterial UCW groups. Folders exist for the following presbyteries: Dauphin, [ca.2002].

Title based on contents.

20. Newsletters. -- 1998 - 2002 (n.i.). -- 2 folders.

The UCW Newsletters found here include issues dating from December 1998 to September 1999 and December 2002.

Title based on contents.

21. Minutes. -- 1993-1996. -- 2 folders.

The Conference UCW minutes found here also include correspondence and reports of the Executive.

Title based on contents

Box List

Box 505/1-2 (previously WO11/WO12)

Records of Conference Women's Groups. Records of the Conference United Church Women.

Accession 1988-35 (Laura Long)

- Pamphlets. – [ca.1950-ca.1980]. – 1 folder.
- Clipsheets. – 1964-1972. – 1 folder.

Accession 2003-2

- Presbyterian Histories. – 2002. – 1 folder.

Box 505/1-4 (previously WO2)

Records of Conference Women's Groups. Records of the Conference United Church Women.

Undetermined Accession

- United Church Women Constitution and By-laws. 1961, 1966. – 1 folder.
- Clipsheets. – 1962-1965. – 1 folder.

Accession 1984-45

- Manitoba Council of United Church Women Constitution. – 1967. – 1 folder.
- Inaugural meeting. – 1962. –1 folder.
- Annual Reports to the Annual Meeting. – 1963-1969. – 7 booklets.
- Directory. – 1964/65. – 1 booklet.
- President's reports and correspondence. 1963-1969. – 1 folder.
- Treasurer's correspondence. – 1962-1969. – 3 folders.
- Finance Committee minutes. – 1961-1968. – 2 folders.
- Bursary Committee. – 1962-1967. – 2 folders.
- Financial statements. – 1962-1968. – 1 folder.
- Financial ledgers. – 1962-1975. – 2 volumes.
- Unified Budget Fund Scrapbook. 1962-1968. – 1 folder.
- Sundry reports. – 1965-1968. – 7 folders.
- Presbytery report forms. – 1967. – 1 folder.
- Pamphlets and Programs. – 1960-1969. – 1 folder.

Accession 1991-25 & 1996-21

- Reports. – 1965-1975. – 1 folder.
- Directories. – 1963/64-1972/73. – 7 booklets.
- Pamphlets. – [ca.1970-1982]. – 1 folder.
- Clipsheets. – 1962-1972. – 1 folder.
 - Study resources. – [ca.1960-1970]. – 1 folder. Accession: 2006 - 12
 - Morning Meditation for UCW Annual Meeting. - 1969. - 1 folder
 - "Do You Know?" Fact Sheet. - 1 folder.

Accession: 2006 - 22

- Newsletter. - December 2002. - 1 folder.

Accession: 2006- 28

Newsletters. - December 1998 - September 1999. - 1 folder.

Accession: 2010-9

Executive Minutes 1993-1997.- 2 folders