



GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH: UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA RECORDS

Mailing Address: The United Church of Canada Archives, 40 Oak Street, Toronto, ON M5A 2C6

Street Address: 40 Oak Street, Toronto, ON M5A 2C6, Lower Level

Website: <https://www.unitedchurcharchives.ca/>

Phone: 1-437-703-2286

E-mail: archives@united-church.ca

Reading Room: Tuesday-Thursday, 10:00 am-3:00 pm

Hours: *NOTE: The Archives is closed on Mondays, Fridays, weekends, and all statutory holidays.*

All researchers are welcome. All will be asked to complete a registration form once in each calendar year, sign a daily guest register, place coats and bags into lockers provided, and adhere to guidelines on records use.

A reference staff person is available during public hours to assist researchers.

The following resources can assist in genealogical research for Ontario:

Local Church Records

This Archives holds records of the United Church and its uniting denominations (Methodist, Congregational, Presbyterian*—1925 union, and Evangelical United Brethren—joined in 1968).

For the above denominations, this Archives holds local church records for the 6.5 Ontario Regional Councils with headquarters in Ontario (EXCLUDING the counties of Carleton, Dundas, Glengarry, Grenville, Prescott, Russell, and Stormont, which are part of the former Montreal/Ottawa Conference; and the former Cambrian Presbytery in northwestern Ontario, *in Prairie to Pine Regional Council; and INCLUDING three churches in Noranda, Val d'Or, and Temiskaming, Quebec*). Other United Church local church records are available in Regional Council Archives across Canada (see page 4).

Record Types

Local church records can include baptismal, marriage, and burial registers. Such registers document these vital events and often name the parents of individuals documented. Other useful records include communion rolls and all forms of membership lists—i.e., circuit registers and historic rolls.

Although 19th-century records exist, most begin after 1896. Only very occasionally are there cemetery records.

In compliance with federal privacy legislation, *The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (S.C. 2000, c.5), records including personal information are **restricted** for:

Baptisms:	100 years
Marriages:	75 years
Burials:	25 years

For more information on access restrictions pertaining to registers, please see our policy [here](#).

*The post-1925 records of congregations, which remained part of the continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada after the establishment of The United Church of Canada, are held in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Archives and Records Office, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, ON M3C 1J7. Phone: 1-800-619-7301.

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Searching for Local Church Records

The **name of the place** where the baptism, marriage, or burial took place is the key search term for access to the records of the over 1,000 congregations available at the Archives. For larger centres, the church name is also needed.

To determine whether the Archives hold the records of the area, search the Archives database at the computer workstations or online (<https://catalogue.unitedchurcharchives.ca/>) for geographical location and/or congregation/pastoral charge name. Search items will describe the fonds name, list of relevant series, extent of holdings, inclusive dates of records followed by predominant dates in brackets, and availability of finding aid. Finding aids are available to view using our online catalogue.

Note: For records with less extensive holdings, the catalogue entry may be the only listing

Indexes

Only a few registers have been indexed by person's name. Ontario Genealogical Society branches have produced indexes for most of the Metro Toronto congregations, Hastings and Prince Edward County, as well as some in Halton County, and more. These publications are available in the reading room.

Photocopying

Most of the registers **cannot be photocopied**. Please consult the reference staff.

Microfilm

Available on microfilm are the minute books and vital record books (primarily baptisms, marriages, and burials) having entries beginning and ending before 1925. The denominations represented include those that became part of The United Church of Canada: Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Evangelical United Brethren. Researchers wishing to check whether records of interest to them are available on microfilm should contact the Archives or search the Archives database for an LCM number. Inter-library loan requests must be submitted by the borrowing library on the usual forms.

Many congregations have retained their own records; consult The United Church of Canada *Year Books* in the reading room, or search the Find a Church online service (<https://united-church.ca/search/locator>) for current addresses and telephone numbers. Although it is the policy of the United Church to have records deposited in an appropriate United Church archives, records sometimes have been deposited in local archives and/or museums.

Personal Registers

Personal registers of individual ministers also include records of baptisms, marriages, and burials. Access restrictions may apply. Please see our policy on registers [here](#).

Central Methodist Baptismal Registers

The *Wesleyan Methodist Baptismal Register* (WMBR) includes baptisms (1825-1910; predominantly 1840-1873) covering primarily Ontario and parts of Quebec. This register (four microfilm reels, plus index by township name) is also available through interlibrary loan and for sale. Please note that even though the register covers a wide area, it is not a complete record of all baptisms that occurred during this period. A printed index is also available in the reading room.

The *Methodist Episcopal Church Niagara Conference Baptismal Register* includes baptisms (1849-1906; predominantly 1858-1886) covering much of southern Ontario and after 1863 extending west of Toronto. An index published by the Ontario Genealogical Society is a transcription of all information in the register except for the minister's name, and is available in the reading room.

Information on ministers, missionaries, and lay workers of The United Church of Canada and its predecessor denominations include:

Biographical Files Collection

The Archives has compiled biographical files on certain ordained ministers, missionaries, and some lay church workers in the various denominations. To search for an individual, search the Biographical database at the computer workstations, or contact staff to see what files exist.

Church Periodicals and Publications

The Archives has a fine collection of church newspapers and magazines; however, most of these resources are not yet discoverable through our online catalogue.

The Archives has digitized and made available *The Christian Guardian*, as well as the Women's Missionary Society Annual Reports, through our online catalogue. Information on how to search these holdings can be found [here](#).

Directories

Directories list ministers by denomination with information on charges served. The directories include the *Cyclopaedia of Methodism in Canada* and those compiled by Douglas Walkington. These resources are available in the reading room.

Local Church History Files Collection

In addition to publications (above), local church history vertical files provide information on many of the Ontario churches. To see these files, contact Archives staff.

Methodist Missionary Society Annual Reports

These reports include lists of contributors to the Missionary Society. The lists of personal names are arranged first by Conference, then by district, then circuit, and finally local church. Although no further information is provided, these reports often place individuals within a particular church if this information is not already available. Ask Archives staff for *Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church* (BV 2550.2.M5 PS REF).

Pension and Personnel Files

Pension (see Finding Aid 298) and personnel files (see Finding Aid 310) are available for some former church workers. Due to lengthy restrictions on access, in accordance with federal privacy legislation, many of these files are closed to research.

Personal Papers

Papers provide more detailed information on individuals, such as ministers and missionaries. See the Archives database for available personal papers.

Photographs

Photographs of people (primarily ministers and missionaries), churches, church-related institutions, and activities are sometimes available. Consult the online catalogue entry for your particular congregation, personal papers, or various photograph collections assembled by the General Council for more information.

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For records outside Ontario, contact the following United Church of Canada Archives:

BERMUDA-NOVA SCOTIA & FUNDY ST. LAWRENCE DAWNING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCILS:

Sarah Wallace, Archivist, 21 Wright Street, Sackville, NB E4L 4P8

Hours: Tues.–Thurs. 8 am–3 pm

Web: <https://ucceast.ca/fslwdw-region-15-archives>

E-mail: swallace@united-church.ca

Phone: 506-306-0383

CHINOOK WINDS & NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCILS:

Leanne Templeton, Archivist, United Church of Canada Archives, c/o Provincial Archives of Alberta, 8555 Roper Rd., Edmonton, AB T6E 5W1

Website: <https://northernspiritrc.ca/about-us/archives/>

E-mail: templeton@united-church.ca

Phone: 780-427-8687

EASTERN ONTARIO OUTAOUAIS REGIONAL COUNCIL (former Ottawa & Seaway Valley Presbyteries):

Anita Jansman, Archivist, James K. Bartleman Centre, City of Ottawa Archives, 100 Tallwood Drive, Nepean, ON K2G 4R7

Website: <https://eoorc.ca/resources/archives/>

Email: ajansman@united-church.ca

FIRST DAWN EASTERN EDGE REGIONAL COUNCIL:

Leona Laundry, Archivist, First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council, 320 Elizabeth Ave, St. John's, NL A1B 1T9

Website: <https://ucceast.ca/first-dawn-eastern-edge-regional-council-16/fdee-archives>

E-mail: LLaundry@united-church.ca

Phone: 1-800-268-3781 ext. 6141

LIVING SKIES REGIONAL COUNCIL:

Mailing address: Living Skies Regional Council Archives (c/o Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan), 2440 Broad Street, Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 0A5

E-mail: livingskiesarchives@united-church.ca

CONSEIL RÉGIONAL NAKONHA:KA REGIONAL COUNCIL (see website for locations of holdings):

Sara DeMelo-Zare, Archivist

Mailing address: 225-50th Avenue, Lachine, Quebec H8T 2T7

Website: <https://nakonhakaucc.ca/resources/archives/>

E-mail: sdzare@united-church.ca

Phone: 1-800-268-3781 extension 6199

PACIFIC MOUNTAIN REGIONAL COUNCIL:

Blair Galston, Regional Archivist, 312 Main Street, Suite 320, Vancouver, BC V6A 2T2

Website: <https://pacificmountain.ca/ministry/the-pmrc-archives/>

E-mail: bgalston@united-church.ca

Phone: 1-800-934-0434

PRAIRIE TO PINE REGIONAL COUNCIL:

Erin Acland, Keeper of the Archives, Archives and Record Centre, University of Winnipeg Library, 515 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9

Website: <http://uccarchiveswinnipeg.ca/>

E-mail: ucarchives@uwinnipeg.ca

Phone: 204-783-0708

- **ALL NATIVE CIRCLE CONFERENCE (former):** The former All Native Circle Conference (ANCC) includes presbyteries with congregations in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec. For records of Keewatin Presbytery and ANCC Conference records, please contact Prairie to Pine Regional Council Archives.

Note: This resource is updated regularly, but to avoid disappointment, contact the appropriate Regional Council Archives before making a visit.