

Archives Committee Purpose + Terms of Reference

November, 2025

Purpose Statement

The Archives Committee serves as an advisory group to the Executive, and supports the Executive's decision-making, policy development, and recommendations related to the Archives of The United Church of Canada. It advises on recordkeeping policies and practices and promotes the value of archives and history throughout the Church. The Working Committee operates with a forward-looking perspective, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Archives' work.

Terms of Reference

Definitions

1. *Archival Records*

Records refers to any recorded information, however recorded, whether in printed form, on film, by electronic means or otherwise; including but not limited to: correspondence, memoranda, plans, maps, drawings, graphic works, photographs, film, microfilm, sound recordings, videotapes, machine-readable records, and any other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics.

2. *Archives*

Archives refers to the records created or received by a person, family, or organization and preserved because of their continuing value. Archives can also refer to the building, buildings or portion thereof housing records of continuing value. At the United Church of Canada, the "Archives" may refer to the General Council Archives, or our Regional Council Archives located in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Newfoundland.

3. *Archives Network*

[The Archives Network](#) is a network of Archivists throughout the United Church of Canada working at the General Council or Regional Council Archives. The Archives Network operates under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by Executive Ministers and Officers in 2023. The MOU reflects the relationship between the General Council and regional councils with respect to archives and records management and ensures standard archival practice, technology and staffing.

4. *Artifacts*

Artifacts are tangible, man-made, objects that provide insights into past cultures and events. They are collected by the General Council and regional council offices, General Council Archives and some regional council archives. Artifacts within the United Church of Canada come from a variety of places such as (but not limited to) communities of faith, personal donations or gifts from global partners.

Responsibilities

The Working Group is responsible to:

1. Support the Archives in the development of policy and recommendations in areas of common concern between the General Council and Regional Council Archives, and/or the United Church of Canada as a whole.
2. Take on specific tasks as directed and as issues arise.
3. Cooperate with Archivists on any tasks related to this work.
4. Represent all stakeholders of The United Church of Canada and its Archives.
5. Advocate for Archives at the General Council and General Council Executive by carrying forth policy, recommendations and issues to be discussed.
6. Stimulate interest in the history of the United Church, promote the Archives programs and services, and encourage the donation of records to the Archives.

Membership:

1. Representatives from regional council Member(s) of the Indigenous Church
2. Academic researcher or historian of The United Church of Canada
3. Archivist representatives from a regional council
4. Managing Archivist, General Council Archives

Skills, Qualities, Experience Needed

1. Interest and/or knowledge in the history of The United Church of Canada.
2. Understanding of Archives, archival research, records and information management.
3. Traditional Indigenous knowledge and experience.
4. Experience in managing archives or expertise in information management is an asset.
5. Potential for collaboration with aligned organizations.
6. Member of or connection with communities that are traditionally underrepresented.
7. Concurrence with the mission and goals of the United Church of Canada and its Archives.

Authority and Limitations

1. The committee is authorized to support decision making and make recommendations.
2. The committee will not be responsible for operations/oversight of the archives or its staff.

Meetings

1. The committee will meet virtually, and on an as-needed basis.

Examples of possible forthcoming projects and work:

- Establishing an Artifacts Policy for The United Church of Canada
- Review of The United Church of Canada's "Historic Commemorations Program"
- Review of Collections and Acquisition Mandates as needed