



**The United Church  
of Canada  
General Council**

# **GC45 Apology to 2SLGBTQIA+ Communities by The United Church of Canada for Summer 2025**

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## **Origin: General Secretary**

At the 42nd General Council, the church approved support for a national process of a Living Apology installation project for dialogue, storytelling, education, and reconciliation with persons who identify as sexual or gender diverse including but not limited to Two-Spirited, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer persons. [The Iridesce: The Living Apology Project](#) launched in 2017 was a collaboration between the General Council Office (GCO) and Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble (AU/SE).

Over three years, the project gathered stories from across the United Church and submitted its final report to the General Secretary in July 2020. Upon review of the report, it was recommended that the General Council Office (GCO) form a working group to recommend follow-up actions to the General Council Executive (Michiko Bown-Kai, Dieulita Datus-Hall, Aaron Miechkota, Hyerim Park, Gary Paterson, Pegi Ridout, Leeann Shimoda, Caitlin Smithers, Ruth Wood, Brent Alexander, Julian Munro/King Julez, Beth Baskin, Ren Ito, Sarah-Anne Williams, Greg Daly). The working group concluded and submitted formal recommendations for follow-up on the [Iridesce Project in February 2023](#). The Executive received the report in May of 2023 ([GS 33](#)), and acted on the recommendation to craft and offer an apology to 2S and LGBTQIA+ communities.

In November 2023, an apology task group was appointed to draft an intentional living apology that moves beyond a statement to explicit action (Michiko Bown-Kai (acting Chair), Aaron Miechkota, Christine Dolson, Frederick Monteith, Tricia Gerhard). Recognizing the need for apologies to be lived into with action, the apology task group has developed a statement in response to the findings of Iridesce: The Living Apology Project and the 2011 National

## LGBT Consultation.

Over the past decade the Church has engaged in intentional listening processes to better understand the experiences of 2S & LGBTQIA+ people within The United Church of Canada. We have engaged in prayer, reflection, art, listening, community building, and more through a National GLBTT Consultation (2011) and Iridesce: The Living Apology Project (2017-2019) and the Living Apology into Action working group (2023). We are grateful for each story that has been shared and hold with sadness the large reality that there are still many stories of harm left untold.

The Apology Task Group developed the first draft of the statement in June 2024. Through Regional Council Executives, the Task Group invited initial feedback to the zero draft in an online survey and a total of 34 responses were received.

In January 2025, a public town hall meeting was held, during which the Task Group presented the draft of the Apology. The Town Hall was attended by 96 people. The Task Group provided an update on the Apology development and welcomed insight into what needs more attention. Participants also spent some time in small groups brainstorming ways that the church could invite Communities of Faith across the country to live into the apology. The GCE reviewed and adopted the text of the apology at its meeting in March 2025.

The Apology to Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+ communities by The United Church of Canada is a covenant of solidarity, justice, and faithfulness. Through its adoption and implementation, The United Church of Canada embodies its commitment to being an inclusive and affirming faith community, ensuring that past wrongs are acknowledged, relationships are restored, and the Church continues to stand boldly for the dignity and rights of all people.

The apology creates an opportunity to learn, remember, and uplift the stories of 2S & LGBTQIA+ justice work within the history of The United Church of Canada: the stories of challenges, heartbreak, and oppression and the stories of solidarity, healing, and celebration.

For information the task group acknowledges the insights and contributions of Steven Shales to the initial process of drafting the apology statement, particularly regarding 2-Spirit peoples.

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