



The United Church of Canada/L'Église Unie du Canada

# Annual Report 2015



The Right Rev.  
Jordan Cantwell,  
Moderator



Nora Sanders,  
General Secretary

*Dear friends in Christ,*

Everywhere we have been in Canada, people are seeking ways to walk in paths of reconciliation. We are at a significant moment in history—there is a new awareness of and commitment to that goal. We have the opportunity to re-establish this nation and our church on a new foundation of mutuality, equity, and respect. The impact of Western/Christian colonialism has been far-reaching, as we have personally seen in our 2015 travels to China and Korea. What we do in Canada has a profound impact on the rest of the world since people across the globe look to us for solidarity and encouragement. God calls us to love and serve others. Thank you for your part in our collective Mission & Service as we go down the path of reconciliation together.

## Commitment to Reconciliation

After six years of important truth-telling, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its final report in June 2015. Our church was there to acknowledge the role we played in supporting government policies of oppression and assimilation. We are committed to the transformative work of healing and reconciliation as spelled out in the 94 Calls to Action.



Former Moderator Gary Paterson at the release of the Truth and Reconciliation report, June 2015  
Photo: James Scott

“Respecting Indigenous peoples’ right to self-determination in spiritual matters, including the right to practise, develop, and teach their own spiritual and religious traditions, customs, and ceremonies...”

—Call to Action 48



# Enter Rejoicing!

The Right Rev. Jordan Cantwell and the Rev. John C. Dorhauer, United Church of Christ (USA), celebrate at the full communion service in October.

Photos above and below:  
The United Church of Canada

With great excitement and anticipation, The United Church of Canada approved a full communion agreement with the United Church of Christ (USA) in August 2015. The new agreement was signed and celebrated by almost 400 people at a service at St. Andrew's United Church in Niagara Falls, Ontario, on October 17.

Full communion emphasizes both churches' openness to cooperate on matters of witness, mission, worship, and the proclamation of a common faith. There are remarkable similarities between the two churches in their commitment to social justice and to inclusion of diversity in sexual and gender identities, in disabilities, and in theological openness and expression. The two churches share many global relationships as well as similar ideals of partnership in mission.



## THE 5 MARKS OF FULL COMMUNION

**Common Confession of Christ**

**Mutual Recognition of Members**

**Common Celebration of Communion**

**Mutual Recognition and Reconciliation of Ordained Ministries**

**Common Commitment to Mission**

“What makes this relationship so important is common mission in God’s world—to go out in the world and bear witness for God’s love for all.”

—Moderator Jordan Cantwell

# The Now and Future of the Church\*

## @GC42Pilgrimage

Thanks @cbcian and family for the amazing breakfast. Awesome waffles!

## Katelyn's blog post

Community is key. One person can make a difference, but many can change the world.

## @GC42Pilgrimage

Thanks @FirstUnitedDTES for hosting us today and for showing us Downtown East Side. It was a very moving experience for us all. God Bless!

## Aidan's blog post

I am seeing that as people of faith we can do really great things in the world. We have the power to move mountains.

## @knoxunitedvan

Each step that has been taken so far stores the memories.

## @GC42Pilgrimage

We go home in 40 days.... That's forever! That's how long Noah was on the ark!

On July 4, 2015,

13 United Church young people and two leaders set off from Vancouver on a trip across the country.

Their journey took them to various communities across the nation, where they listened to the dreams and needs of fellow young people. More than a month later, they arrived in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, to share their experiences with the 42nd General Council.

\*"We are both the now and the future of the church," quote from Katelyn, July 23, 2015, <https://gc42pilgrimage.wordpress.com>.



Refugee camp in Jordan near the Syrian border  
Photo: David Armour/  
The United Church of Canada

# A Generous Response to the Syrian Crisis

In 2015, the people of The United Church of Canada acted out of love and generosity to support Syrians in new lives in Canada, in refugee camps, and in their homes.

- Congregations joined other churches and community donors to raise \$7 million to welcome over 500 refugees to their new life as Canadians.
- Donations of over \$0.9 million poured into the Emergency Response Fund to support Syrian refugees waiting in refugee camps.
- Canadian Foodgrains Bank delivered thousands of food boxes to families in Syria so they won't become refugees.

Through all of this, the Mission & Service of the church was there funding

- Canadian Foodgrains Bank
- staff that manage the church's refugee program with the federal government
- staff for the Emergency Response Fund

*Thank you!*



**\$7 MILLION**

Raised by congregations and donors to sponsor Syrian refugees



**OVER 500**

Syrian refugees welcomed to Canada



**\$0.9 MILLION**

Donations for Syrian refugee camps



**THOUSANDS**

Canadian Foodgrains Bank food boxes delivered to Syrian families

The United Church of Canada is a Sponsorship Agreement Holder for all of Canada except Quebec, which has its own sponsorship program. The General Council Office facilitates refugee sponsorships, matching refugees with constituent groups (congregations and pastoral charges), assisting with and submitting applications, answering questions and concerns, and serving as a liaison between the constituent groups and the government.

# Mission & Service 2015 Results

Each year *Mission & Service at a Glance* provides the budget plan and narrative budget for Mission & Service. Presented here are the actual results.

The pie chart below shows actual revenue and expenditures on track with the budget plan, with the following notes:

1. Generous annual giving by UCW, congregations, and individuals totalled \$24.99 million. This has continued an annual slow decline and was \$0.67 million below 2014 annual giving, resulting in the second-lowest rate of decline in five years. This occurred in a year of enormous generosity. Over and above giving for their local ministries and Mission & Service, the people of the United Church made this a year of historic generosity to those affected by humanitarian crises in Nepal and Syria, including direct support for Syrian refugees in camps (\$0.9 million) and resettlement in Canada (\$7 million).
2. Giving through wills and other planned giving to Mission & Service increased in 2015 (\$2.1 million) after a significant decrease in 2014. By their very nature, planned gift totals fluctuate more than regular annual giving. In 2015, \$0.5 million (30 percent of gifts from wills and assets from the sale of church property received in 2014 at the General Council Office) was endowed in the Foundation to strengthen the long-term work of the church.
3. Giving for Mission & Service through The United Church of Canada Foundation continues to grow. This supports strong growth in grants for Mission & Service from the Foundation.

## Mission & Service Expenditures: 2015 Actual (\$33.6 million)

- 1 Global Mission & Service**  
\$7.7 million (22.9%)
- 2 Community and Justice Work**  
\$4.9 million (14.6%)
- 3 Theological Education and Ministry Support**  
\$2.2 million (6.6%)
- 4 Faith Formation**  
\$7.8 million (23.2%)
- 5 Support to Local Ministries**  
\$7.1 million (21.1%)
- 6 Conference Leadership**  
\$3.9 million (11.6%)

## Mission & Service Program Revenue

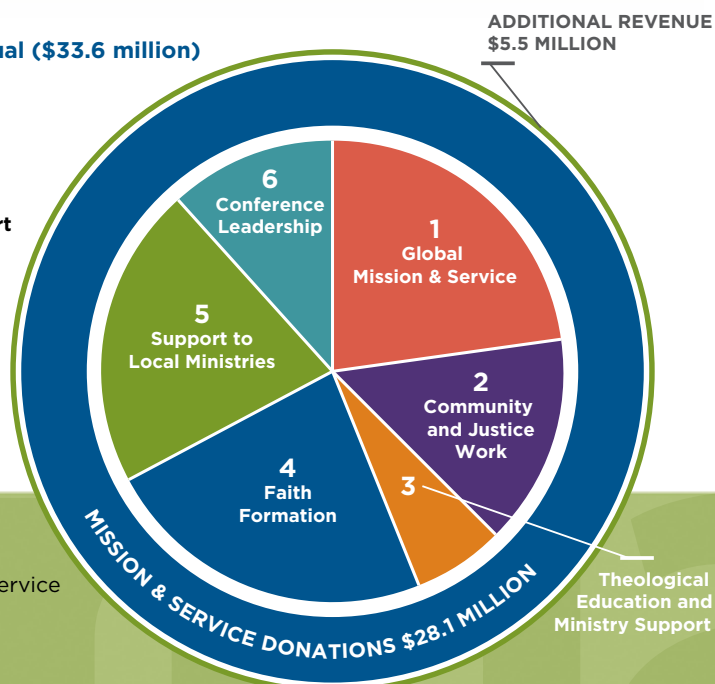
Donations for Mission & Service: \$28.1 million  
 Donations designated for specific Mission & Service partner organizations: \$3.1 million  
 Donations—unrestricted: \$0.8 million  
 Other revenue: \$1.6 million

## General Council Governance and Leadership (\$4.7 million)

As in previous years, this area of work is funded by other revenue and a draw down of capital reserves to meet the annual expenditure commitment.

## Pension and Group Health Insurance (\$2.5 million)

As in previous years, these services are self-funded by the participants in the pension and group health insurance program.



# Financial Snapshot 2015

## The United Church of Canada

The year 2015 was a relatively steady-state year from an operating perspective, and the financial results are a considerable improvement from our conservatively budgeted assumptions. Future budget projections continue to demonstrate the need for urgent and substantive change, but we have at least slowed the rate of unrestricted reserve depletion and have more capacity to make needed changes.

The operating deficit in the General Operating Fund was \$1.73 million, or \$1.1 million after factoring the change in value of our investments. Total revenue was fairly level with 2014, with the decline in annual Mission & Service giving largely offset by legacy gifts, which returned to normal levels after a below-average 2014. Not all legacy gift monies received in 2015 are available for budget relief, however, as 40 percent will be entrusted to the Foundation to be used for the long term. Total operating expenses were up slightly from 2014, reflecting the increased activity associated with any year in which a triennial General Council meeting is held. The overall financial result after factoring in restricted fund activity, actuarial valuation changes, and market value adjustment for investments is virtually break-even.

## The United Church of Canada Foundation

With continued support from generous donors and organizations across the church, 2015 was a year of growth and service. The pivotal event in the growth of the Foundation was the transfer in 2013 of \$29.2 million in long-term funds from the General Council of the church. These assets now make up close to two-thirds of the assets under management, making the Foundation financially self-sufficient and able to cover all of its own operating costs.

At December 31, 2015, the Foundation had \$55,489,770 in assets, an increase of \$1,347,298 (2.4 percent) over 2014. In 2015 the Foundation's Board awarded 40 grants from the Seeds of Hope Granting Program totalling \$341,436; 12 grants from the New Ministries Fund totalling \$198,460; 19 scholarships, bursaries, and academic awards totalling \$108,350; and 8 grants from the Good Samaritan Fund totalling \$193,410. The Foundation also granted \$1.1 million to Mission & Service and \$480,000 to support programs and other work of the church.

For the full report and audited financial statements please see [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca) and [www.unitedchurchfoundation.ca](http://www.unitedchurchfoundation.ca) (search "financial statements").

*Thank You!*

*With gratitude, we celebrate the gifts shared for God's mission, offering hope and kindness to people and places in Canada and around the world.*



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