



2016 Year in Review



The Right Rev.
Jordan Cantwell,
Moderator



Nora Sanders,
General Secretary

Dear friends in Christ,

Looking back at 2016, one of the highlights for both of us was taking part in the 30th anniversary of the church's first Apology to First Nations Peoples (see more on this on page 2). In Sudbury, Ontario, we gathered around the cairn where the church first acknowledged that it was once complicit in disrespecting Indigenous culture, traditions, and spirituality. While this Apology commemoration illustrated our church's commitment to living into right relations, it also reminded us how far we still have to go. There is so much work that needs to get done before we have truly relinquished the attitudes and privileges we have come to assume through our legacy of colonialism. Thank you for your part in our collective Mission & Service as we go down the path of reconciliation together.

Supporting Education in Haiti

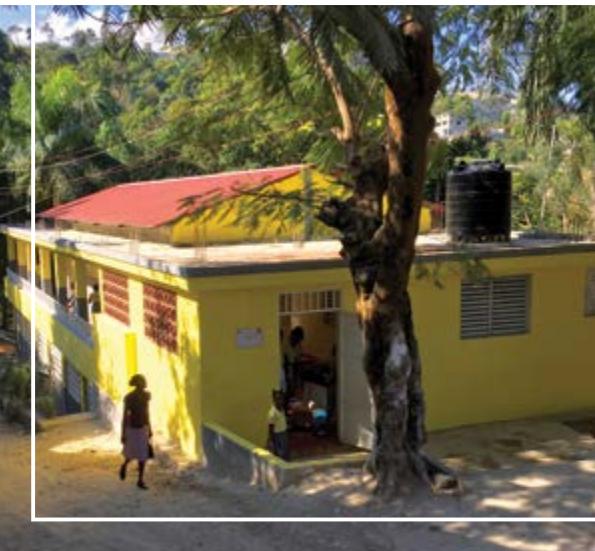


Photo: Jim Hodgson/The United Church of Canada

Duplan Secondary School can accommodate over 200 students.

After the 2010 earthquake, our Mission & Service partners the Methodist Church of Haiti and the Karl Lévêque Cultural Institute asked that we support their work in education. The United Church contributed 80 percent of the cost of building Duplan Secondary School (the Methodist Church of Ireland gave the rest). Earlier, the United Church helped build a community school in Kotrel. With gifts to Mission & Service and the emergency appeal we have also supported education in Haiti through scholarships, school fees, teachers' salaries, and community development that enables families to keep kids in school.

Marking a Milestone

*Thirty years on, we still strive
toward promises made.*

The year 2016 marked the 30th anniversary of the United Church's Apology to First Nations Peoples. On August 20, nearly 200 people from across the country gathered in Sudbury, Ontario, at the cairn built in 1988 to commemorate this beginning step in the journey of reconciliation.

Some of those gathered had been present in 1986, including Alberta Billy, who asked the United Church for the apology, and former Moderator The Very Rev. Bob Smith, who later delivered it. Others were the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of the original witnesses. All were there to recommit to the work of reconciliation.

The cairn stands as a reminder of the promise made and the work still required to fulfill that promise. And in the same year the church took one more step in the journey when we pledged, on March 31, to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework of reconciliation. In doing so, we are not simply repudiating our past actions—we are committing to build new structures of mutuality, equity, and respect.

Find the full text of the 1986 Apology, our statement on the UN Declaration, and more resources for reconciliation on www.united-church.ca.



Photo: Kelly Buehler

Alberta Billy and former Moderator The Very Rev. Bob Smith at the cairn.



Photo: Jim Hodgson/The United Church of Canada

Hurricane Matthew Update

In October Hurricane Matthew killed almost 1,000 Haitians and devastated many communities in Haiti's southern peninsula, a major agricultural region. With the severe loss of crops, livestock, and livelihoods, over a million people are struggling to survive. The United Church's emergency appeal continues to accept donations for ongoing relief and reconstruction work in Haiti: www.united-church.ca/hurricane-matthew

Rising from the Ashes

Members of Fort McMurray First United Church are astounded by the compassion they received from across the country after May wildfires forced their entire town to evacuate. The church was untouched by fire, but the homes of six families from the

52-member congregation suffered severe damage or were completely destroyed.

People and congregations across the country, as well as Alberta and Northwest Conference and the national church, sent cheques, cards, clothing, and messages of love and support. “I’d open the letters and just cry,” says the Rev. Donalee Williams.

Despite the ongoing effects of stress that will take longer to heal, the congregation will be celebrating its 50th anniversary the weekend of April 21–23, 2017—almost one year to the day their city was evacuated—with Moderator Jordan Cantwell as their guest.



Photo: Fort McMurray First United Church

Fort McMurray First United Church's Wall of Thanks shows the locations of those who made gifts directly to the congregation.

We Love Innovation!

Embracing the Spirit helps faith communities grow their ideas.

Want to pilot a program in your faith community, get an initiative off the ground, be part of a learning network, or get some help with developing a great idea? Embracing the Spirit can help ensure the energy and seed money are there to lift up your ideas.

The new learning network and innovation fund, which is fully funded by giving to Mission & Service, launched in July 2016 at the Skylight Festival in Paris, Ontario. Guest speakers talked about their faith communities' initiatives, and a mini Social Innovation Challenge showcased more great ideas.

Search “Embracing the Spirit” on www.united-church.ca, where you'll also find our e-newsletter.

Mission & Service 2016 Results

Each year in *Mission & Service at a Glance*, we provide the budget plan and narrative budget for Mission & Service. Presented here is an overview of results for 2016. Actual 2016 revenue was on track with the budget plan, with the following notes:

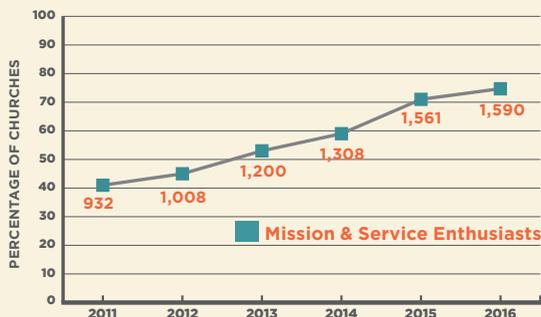
For a pie chart of 2016 revenue and expenses, visit united-church.ca as of July 1, 2017 (search "Mission & Service results").

1. Generous annual giving by United Church Women (UCW), congregations, and individuals totalled \$24.27 million. This amount was as budgeted. Continuing an annual slow decline, it was \$0.72 million below 2015 annual giving.
2. Giving through wills and other planned giving to Mission & Service decreased in 2016 (to \$1.05 million) after an increase in 2015. By their nature, planned giving and gifts from wills fluctuate more than regular congregational, UCW, and individual giving. In 2016, \$1,225,420 (40% of gifts from wills and assets from the sale of church property received in 2015 at the General Council Office) was endowed in The United Church of Canada Foundation to strengthen the long-term work of the church.
3. Designated giving for specific Mission & Service partners and programs continues to be strong.
4. Giving for Mission & Service from the United Church Foundation includes giving to the unified fund and to specific Mission & Service partners and ministries. The growth of this had been largely driven by the transfer of endowed assets from the church along with some recent donations.
5. This significant generosity for God's mission through the local church and through Mission & Service was offered in the context of continued historic engagement in refugee sponsorship and support ministries.

PEOPLE IN THE UNITED CHURCH GAVE GENEROUSLY IN 2016



NUMBER OF CHURCHES WITH MISSION & SERVICE ENTHUSIASTS



Financial Snapshot

The United Church of Canada

By both operating budget and financial statement measures, 2016 was a positive year. Expense savings and investment gains offset declines in revenue. Eight years of positive investment results coupled with expense management efforts has slowed the rate of unrestricted reserve depletion. While future projections continue to demonstrate the need for substantive change, we have good capacity to make those changes.

The audited church financial statements include elements that we actively budget and manage, but also elements that are more variable. For example, emergency appeal receipts and grants are excluded from our budgetary reporting. Similarly, KAIROS finances (approximately \$2 million per year) are consolidated on our financial statements to meet regulatory requirements, but a separate process applies. As we await the outcomes of the remit process, planning is underway to support the full range of possible outcomes and the need for ongoing savings. This includes contingency planning in partnership with our Conferences and a consolidation of General Council Office space.

The United Church of Canada Foundation

In 2016 individuals and communities across the country continued their generosity and support for the long-term work of the church through the Foundation. We are grateful for the support the General Council has shown since the Foundation's inception, including the transfer of its long-term assets in 2013.

At December 31, 2016, the Foundation had \$58,699,922 in assets, an increase of \$3,210,152 (an increase of 5.6%) over 2015. In 2016, the Foundation's board awarded the following: 33 grants from Seeds of Hope, total, \$411,588; 12 grants from New Ministries Funds, total, \$299,330; 15 scholarships and academic awards, total, \$153,000; 10 grants from Good Samaritan Fund, total \$177,925. The Foundation also granted \$1.2 million to the Mission & Service unified fund and made \$485,000 in designated grants to Mission & Service partners/programs.

For audited 2016 financial statements, visit united-church.ca and unitedchurchfoundation.ca as of July 1, 2017 (search "financial statements").



Kamloops United Church, an Affirming ministry, joins Thompson Rivers University's 2016 Pride march.

Because God Loves All

Being Affirming means being out and public, proud and loving.

A record-breaking number of United Church ministries became Affirming ministries in 2016—that is, explicitly, intentionally, and publicly inclusive of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Twenty-six ministries of all kinds joined the nationwide network of over 165 ministries of United Church partner Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble (<http://ause.ca>). And in 2016, the first United Church camp and the first ecumenical partner—the Student Christian Movement—joined 100 other ministries that are in the discerning and decision-making stage of the journey.

Spotlight on Mission & Service Global Partners



Threshing aerobic rice, which is a cultivation method as well as a special variety of rice.

Planting Sustainable Rice in the Philippines

As part of its ongoing response to 2013's Typhoon Haiyan, Mission & Service partner The United Church of Christ in the Philippines works with farmers on sustainable agriculture. "Aerobic rice" is grown in dry soil that is irrigated rather than in traditional flooded fields. Using less water and fertilizer, this method produces similar or greater yields—so farmers can improve their livelihoods as well as grow more food for their families and communities.

Photo: Kelly Buehler



Moderator: 2016 Highlight

Q. What stands out most for you from 2016?

A. The incredible response across our church to the refugee crisis. I don't think I've visited a single community this year that hasn't been part of efforts to sponsor a refugee family. This tremendous level of care and compassion and support for those in need beyond our borders is truly commendable.

Find out the Moderator's highs and lows of 2016 at www.united-church.ca/blogs/round-table.

Spotlight on Mission & Service Global Partners



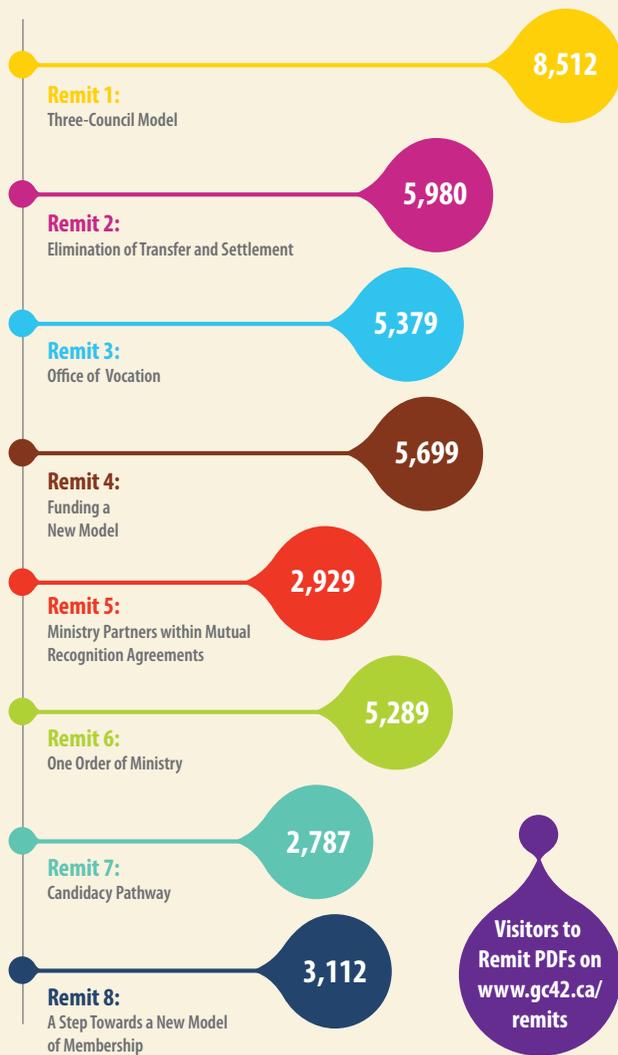
Photo: Kaitlin Bardswich

Growing Food Security in Palestine

The Department of Services to Palestinian Refugees, a Mission & Service partner, works with Palestinian households in the West Bank who face food insecurity, which is linked to the ongoing occupation. People are denied access to fields, are unable to access water, or are cut off from their land by the Separation Wall, settlements, and by-pass roads. About 60 households a year over three years will learn innovative techniques for domestic farming, including using greenhouses, to increase their capacity to produce their own healthy food.

Remits Are Hot!

In 2016 presbyteries and pastoral charges were asked to study and vote on eight remits.
Over 30,000 people visited www.gc42.ca/remits.



Spotlight on Mission & Service Global Partners



Photo: Lauren Hodgson

Empowering Young People in Kenya

The Kenya Alliance for Advancement of Children (KAACR), a Mission & Service partner, is an umbrella organization for almost 200 children's non-governmental agencies in Kenya. It works with children and youth to help them respond to social, economic, and health challenges. Young people learn strategies for dealing with issues they identify, including the effects of HIV/AIDS, conflict resolution, and peace building.



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To comment on this report or make suggestions for future years, e-mail giving@united-church.ca.

La version française de ce rapport annuel serait disponible en ligne au <http://egliseunie.ca>.

Thank You!

Your gifts for Mission & Service make possible the work described in these pages and so much more. With gratitude, we celebrate the gifts you shared for God's mission, offering hope and kindness to people and places in Canada and around the world. To make a gift, please visit www.united-church.ca/donate.