

**Anti-Racism and Racial Justice Work in The United Church of Canada:
A Snapshot in 2020**

This timeline offers an overview of some key moments of anti-racism work in The United Church of Canada.

What Has the United Church Been Doing to Address Racism?

1943	The United Church’s first National Japanese United Church Conference (<i>Kyogikai</i>) is held in New Denver, B.C. <i>Kyogikai</i> later focuses on promoting fellowship and publishing and distributing culturally specific materials for Japanese United churches.
1960 and 1964	The United Church acknowledges racism as a sin in response to the removal of members of the Black community and the destruction of the Africville neighbourhood in Halifax, N.S.
1970	The Association of Chinese United Church Congregations is first convened formally in Vancouver; this group later focuses on sharing experiences as well as developing culturally specific prayers and liturgical resources.
1974	The 26th General Council elects the Very Rev. Dr. Wilbur K. Howard as Moderator, and he serves from 1974 to 1977. He is the first—and to date the only—Black person to serve in this role.
1977	General Council 27 decides to review the United Church’s work with Indigenous people.
1978	The first gathering of Korean Canadian congregations of the United Church takes place in Vancouver. The Korean Association of The United Church of Canada later focuses on sharing its Korean heritage with the younger generations, translating Christian educational resources from English into Korean, and supporting local ministries among the Korean United Church congregations in Canada.
1980	The first National Aboriginal Consultations are held (in June and October) and others follow every one to three years; the last one is held in July 2005.
1982	The Euro-Caribbean Group of United Churches is formed; in 1990, Taiwanese members join the group, and the diverse group is renamed the Coalition. The Coalition sought to maintain and nurture its members’ heritages, and to provide a sense of belonging for ethnic minority congregations who felt isolated in their ethno-cultural identities in the church.
1984	The Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Centre for Indigenous ministry training is formed.

1985	At the November meeting of the Executive of the General Council, Alberta Billy of the Native Ministries Council demands that the church apologize to Indigenous peoples for its role in colonization.
1986	The 31st General Council offers an Apology to Indigenous peoples for the church's role in colonization.
1987	The Francis Sandy Centre for Indigenous ministry training is formed. The Division of Mission in Canada issues the worship and learning resource <i>Moving Beyond Racism</i> .
1988	The 32nd General Council elects the Very Rev. Sang Chul Lee as Moderator, and he serves from 1988 to 1990. A Korean Canadian, he is the first—and to date the only—person of Asian descent to serve in this role. All Native Circle Conference is founded; at the 32nd General Council, it acknowledges the Apology, expressing its hope that the church will live into its words.
1992	The 34th General Council elects the Very Rev. Dr. Stan McKay as Moderator, and he serves from 1992 to 1994. He is the first—and to date the only—Indigenous person to serve in this role. General Council acknowledges the need for anti-racist initiatives, and calls for anti-racism resource materials for worship and education.
1993	The first Sounding the Bamboo conference is held for self-identified women who are Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour. It focuses on the intersections of racism and sexism, and continues once every few years until the mid-2000s. The United Church of Canada makes a submission to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.
1994	The United Church of Canada's Filipino Association is established; it plays a key role in welcoming new Filipino families to Canada, assisting newcomers to find new church homes, sharing mutual concerns, and supporting and encouraging Filipino people who feel isolated in the church. The United Church of Canada's Healing Fund is established.
1996	The Ethnic Ministries Council is officially inaugurated in June 1996; its work focuses on supporting ethno-cultural congregations and diverse racialized and language minority communities of faith.
1997	The first racial-ethnic minority youth conference is held concurrently with the inauguration of the Ethnic Ministries Council; later, in 2009, a Consultation for

	<p>Racialized Youth is held to gather recommendations for the church from youth who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour.</p> <p>Twenty-seven former Alberni Indian Residential School students launch the “Blackwater” lawsuit against the United Church and Government of Canada, seeking compensation and damages for abuses committed by Arthur Plint, a dormitory supervisor. This is the first in thousands of claims that will lead to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.</p> <p>St. Andrew’s United Church makes an apology to former students of Alberni Indian Residential School in May.</p> <p>The 36th General Council makes a Statement of Repentance regarding residential schools in August.</p>
1998	<p>The United Church offers an apology to former students of United Church-run residential schools, their families, and communities in October 1998.</p> <p>The Executive of General Council establishes the Residential Schools Steering Committee and a dedicated staff position.</p> <p>The Ethnic Ministries Council conducts a United Church print media survey to identify areas of racial bias in images and words, and suggest solutions.</p>
2000	<p>General Council 36 approves the United Church’s anti-racism policy (That All May Be One).</p> <p>Ninety people from across the country come together in a Reconciliation and Justice Leadership Support gathering.</p>
2001	<p>The booklet <i>Ending Racial Harassment</i> is created as a way of animating the United Church’s anti-racism policy.</p> <p><i>Repentance, Justice, and the Seeking of Right Relations with Aboriginal Peoples</i> is named as a mission direction in the “Future Directions” report.</p>
2002	<p>The position of General Council Minister, Racial Justice, is created to assist the church in working towards becoming an anti-racist church and walking a new path toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.</p> <p>The Canadian Ecumenical Anti-Racism Network (CEARN) is created by the Canadian Council of Churches; many United Church people offer leadership in CEARN in subsequent years. CEARN later produces several ecumenical anti-racism resources for churches, including <i>Cracking Open White Identity Towards Transformation: White Identity, Power and Privilege</i>; <i>Mamow Be-Mo-</i></p>

	<p><i>Tay-Tah – Let us Walk Together; and From Chains to Freedom: Journeying Towards Reconciliation.</i></p> <p>A staff position for Aboriginal Ministries is created.</p>
2003	The Executive of General Council adopts six principles for guiding right relations work.
2004	The United Church produces <i>That All May Be One: A Resource for Educating toward Racial Justice.</i>
2005	The United Church becomes one of the first churches to capitalize “B” when referring to Black people, and incorporates this change into its style guide.
2006	<p>The 39th General Council approves <i>A Transformative Vision for The United Church of Canada</i> and commits itself to becoming an intercultural church.</p> <p>The 39th General Council mandates racial justice training for all ministry personnel.</p> <p>The 1986 Apology to Indigenous Peoples is translated in Oji-Cree, Swampy Cree, Cree (TH dialect), Oneida, Mohawk, Plains Cree (Y dialect), and Ojibwe. It is also translated into French, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Portuguese, and Spanish.</p> <p>The document <i>Ending Racial Harassment: Creating a Healthy Workplace</i> is produced.</p>
2007	<p>The first gathering of the Journeys of Black Peoples in The United Church of Canada is held; this group later becomes the Black Clergy Network.</p> <p>The Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement comes into effect. This includes the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which launches in August 2018.</p>
2008	<p>The document <i>Ending Racial Harassment: Creating Healthy Congregations</i> is produced.</p> <p>The United Church of Canada holds its first “Behold! An Intercultural Conference,” which gathers together diverse participants from around the world, and has a focus on racial justice, diversity, and equity. This is the first of several national and regional gatherings.</p> <p>To recognize and affirm the work of Aboriginal ministries, the Executive of General Council meeting in Quebec City forms the Aboriginal Ministries Circle</p>

	<p>as a separate working unit of the General Council Office. It is inaugurated in 2009.</p> <p>The Moderator joins Indigenous and church leaders in a multi-city tour focused on the legacy of residential schools and the work of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.</p> <p>The United Church calls for unprecedented public attention on June 11 as Prime Minister Stephen Harper delivers Canada's apology to residential school survivors and their families.</p> <p>The “Living into Right Relations” network is established at a national gathering in Pinawa, Manitoba. Part of its goal is to help people in the United Church participate in reconciliation initiatives such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.</p>
2009	<p>BC Conference apologizes to the Vancouver Japanese United Church for its misappropriation of its building during the Japanese internment, and this apology is acknowledged at the 40th General Council in Kelowna, B.C.</p> <p>The church’s work on Empire begins; some aspects of this work focus on racial power.</p> <p>The 40th General Council approves a motion to acknowledge the presence and spirituality of Indigenous people as a significant component to the Basis of Union and directs that Indigenous people become signatories. It also directs that a new United Church crest be developed that acknowledges the presence and spirituality of Indigenous people in the United Church.</p>
2010	<p>General Council declares National Aboriginal Day on June 21 a staff holiday; this day is later renamed National Indigenous Day. (It is also known within churches as Indigenous Day of Prayer.)</p> <p>The Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Centre and Francis Sandy Centre are amalgamated.</p>
2011	<p>Mandatory racial justice training for all ministry personnel begins.</p>
2012	<p>The Executive of the General Council of the United Church unanimously agrees to disown the Doctrine of Discovery, a historical concept that has been used to rationalize the enslavement and colonization of Indigenous peoples around the world.</p> <p>The Executive of General Council adopts its “Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church.”</p>

	<p>The 41st General Council approves changes to the United Church’s crest, adding the four traditional colours and the phrase “All My Relations” in the Mohawk language.</p> <p>Ray Jones, chair of Aboriginal Ministries Council, and Mardi Tindal, Moderator of The United Church of Canada, sign a covenant acknowledging the need for an ongoing relationship rejecting historical attitudes and affirming the commitment to move forward in right relations.</p> <p>The United Church of Canada, along with many other denominations, works with the Canadian Churches’ Forum to co-create the Deepening Understanding for Intercultural Ministry (DUIM) program; this five-day ecumenical program has a focus on anti-racism and has had close to 100 United Church people participate in subsequent years.</p>
2013	<p>The <i>Beyond Diversity: Courageous Conversations on Race</i> seminar is held at the General Council Office, with 55 participants from across the country.</p> <p>Wampum, a partnership with Aboriginal Ministries and the United Church’s Five Oaks Education and Retreat Centre, brings together Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth for a shared learning experience of each other’s cultures and histories.</p>
2014	<p>The United Church of Canada makes an expression of reconciliation at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s national event in Edmonton.</p>
2015	<p>In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commissioners, the United Church issues a statement acknowledging and affirming Indigenous spiritualities.</p> <p>The United Church of Canada accepts the final report and Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.</p>
2016	<p>The United Church, both as a denomination and as part of the ecumenical community, adopts the principles, norms, and standards of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework of reconciliation.</p> <p>The Caretakers of Our Indigenous Circle, a group of representatives from across the Indigenous church, begin work to envision a new model of the Indigenous church within The United Church of Canada.</p>
2017	<p>The Executive of General Council establishes the White Privilege Working Group, a related Reference Group for Indigenous Peoples, as well as a Reference Group for Racialized Peoples.</p>

	<p>The Canadian Churches' Forum later becomes the Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning (FILL); the United Church is an active member in continuing this ecumenical work on anti-racism and intercultural engagement.</p> <p>The United Church is engaged in advocacy at the 36th session of the UN Human Rights Council through its response to the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent about their trip to Canada, including offering ideas about further strengthening the report, and sharing suggestions for additional recommendations.</p> <p>The Caretakers' Report, "Calls to the Church," is approved at the National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering in Pinawa, Manitoba.</p>
2018	<p>About 50 people from across the United Church attend the White Privilege Conference held in Toronto; attendees commit to follow up and action on anti-racism.</p> <p>At the 43rd General Council, in the final two hours of the afternoon session, many of the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour participants line up at microphones to share their painful stories of racial exclusion within the church.</p> <p>The 43rd General Council receives the Calls to the Church from Indigenous United Church communities, and a process of community consultation in Indigenous communities of faith is initiated.</p> <p>The United Church of Canada partners with The United Church of Christ in the United States to engage with the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent.</p> <p>BC Conference and the General Council make reparations to the Vancouver Japanese United Church.</p>
2019	<p>The Executive of General Council extends the mandate of the White Privilege Working Group.</p> <p>The Executive of General Council (GCE) establishes its GCE Anti-Racism Working Group.</p> <p>A newly updated and expanded curriculum for racial justice education (Sessions 1 and 2) is mandated for training by the Office of Vocation, beginning May 2019.</p>

	<p>Two briefs on anti-racism and online hate crime are submitted to the Canadian Parliament and to United Nations’ Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.</p> <p>United Church leaders participate in and represent The United Church of Canada at the Working Group of Experts on Peoples of African Descent.</p> <p>The Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy and Procedures is translated into Korean.</p> <p>The new self-determining Indigenous church within The United Church of Canada is launched at the National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering in Rama, Ontario. This includes the creation of a National Indigenous Council and a National Indigenous Elders Council.</p>
2020	<p>The United Church of Canada makes a joint commitment with the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) on the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent.</p> <p>The United Church makes a joint commitment with the ACC and the ELCIC on anti-Black racism.</p> <p>The Executive of General Council issues a statement on Black Lives Matter to the United Church.</p> <p>A newly updated and expanded curriculum for racial justice education (Sessions 3 and 4) is approved for training by the Office of Vocation to be offered starting in October 2020.</p>