



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

416-231-5931 | 1-800-268-3781  
united-church.ca | egliseunie.ca

## **Dreaming a Better World Into Being: For the Sake of God's Beloved World The United Church of Canada, 45th General Council (2025) Calgary, Alberta**

The United Church of Canada's national body, the General Council, gathered in Calgary, Alberta, from August 5–11, 2025, with the theme of "Visions and Dreams." The United Church was joined by global, ecumenical, and interfaith partners who accompany us in our work for justice, peace, the integrity of Creation, and the flourishing and well-being of all peoples and the world.

As a Christian denomination, The United Church of Canada holds firmly to the promise of a better world, where human rights and dignity for all are upheld and where all have abundant and flourishing life. Being bold and daring in our commitments to justice in the church, in this land now called Canada, and in the world, we offer this public statement. As Christians, we cannot remain silent in the face of oppression, injustice, and violence. This is what we believe and therefore what we proclaim to the world.

### **Apology to Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+ Communities**

With repentance and lament, the United Church of Canada apologized to the Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+ communities for the harms done by the United Church. We acknowledge the emotional, physical, and spiritual hurt that the church has caused and continues to cause. We lament the ongoing denial of the humanity of trans siblings. We acknowledge that our world continues to fan the flames of intolerance and separation that seek to erase and ignore the existence of the 2S and LGBTQIA+ community.

The United Church of Canada calls for:

- Provincial governments to revoke legislature that denies trans folk life-affirming medical procedures, that either ignores or rejects chosen names and pronouns, and that erases the existence of 2S and LGBTQIA+ from classrooms, bookstores, and libraries.
- All provincial governments and the federal government to uphold the human rights of 2S and LGBTQIA+ peoples in this country.

### **Global Peace and Justice**

The United Church of Canada calls and works for peace and justice around the world. We raise our voice now to call particular attention to these areas of the world:

#### **Gaza, West Bank (Occupied Palestinian Territories)**

The genocide in Gaza has reached unimaginable horror. On August 7, 2025, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared his government's plan to occupy Gaza, confirming decades of warnings from Palestinian communities. This comes amid the deliberate deprivation

of food, the weaponization of aid, and the destruction of hospitals, schools, water systems, and homes. Families have been displaced repeatedly, children are dying of starvation, and communities lack clean water, medical care, and safe shelter. These crimes against humanity demand our moral response as people of faith. We cannot remain silent as the survival of Palestinians in Gaza hangs in the balance.

The United Church of Canada:

- Calls upon the Government of Canada to prioritize the protection of civilian life, ensure unimpeded humanitarian access, impose a comprehensive, two-way arms embargo on Israel, including closing loopholes such as exports via the U.S., ensure security for journalists and humanitarian aid workers, and work toward sustainable peace that honors the dignity and rights of all people in the region.
- Commits itself to prayer, advocacy, and concrete action to support those in need and to work for the day when Palestinians and Israelis alike can grow up in safety, security, and hope alongside one another, and calls on all people of faith and goodwill to do the same.

### **Latin America**

We have heard the cry of our partner churches from the Americas south of the Rio Grande. From an active sense of hope, we denounce the powers of exclusion and death, those that lacerate the dignity of human beings and the Earth. We name the violation of human rights, the criminalization of the right to human mobility, the polarization of societies fueled by political and religious fundamentalisms, the increase in all types of violence, including institutional violence, that disproportionately affect women, girls, Indigenous, Black, and LGBTQIA+ communities, and the degradation of the region's natural resources by extractive companies.

The United Church, in its commitment to raising its prophetic voice in the pursuit of peace and justice for the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, especially:

- Denounces Canadian companies that extract the region's natural resources under the guise of a "green" economy.
- Calls for the lifting of the economic and financial blockade of Cuba imposed by the United States government.
- Accompanies partners in the struggles for peace and human and civil rights in their countries, especially lifting up Cuba, Colombia, El Salvador, and Venezuela.
- Continues its ministry of accompaniment and solidarity with global partners in the region, as a fundamental instrument in the growth of its identity as part of the universal church.

### **The Korean Peninsula**

In this year marking the 80th anniversary of liberation from Japan and subsequent division, and the 72nd anniversary of the Armistice Agreement of the Korean War, the Korean Peninsula remains one of the most militarized and tense regions in the world.

In deep solidarity with Korean churches in their pursuit of peace and reconciliation, The United Church of Canada:

- Invites all United Church communities of faith to join in the annual Prayer for Peace on the Korean Peninsula (on the Sunday closest to 15 August).
- Calls for the lifting of sanctions that block humanitarian aid and civil society exchange, and pledges to work alongside the Korean diaspora in Canada to strengthen international solidarity.
- Seeks to integrate peacebuilding with responses to the climate crisis, so that reconciliation and shared flourishing may take root on the peninsula.

### Indigenous Rights, Confronting Residential School Denialism, Reconciliation, and Reparation

The United Church of Canada is serious about its commitment to walking in right relationship with Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and calls on all Canadians to do the same. We publicly reiterate our commitment to honouring the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), as well as the findings of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and from the Special Interlocutor on Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites.

The United Church recognizes its own complicity in settler colonialism. We continue to work on decolonizing our practices and institution, as we continue the journey of truth-telling, reconciliation, and making reparations. In particular, we categorically reject residential school denialism. We are at a critical time where we are working genuinely to mend and build relationships.

The United Church therefore calls on Canadian society and all levels of government to:

- Undertake and continue this critical work of truth-telling, reconciliation, and reparations.
- Live into the Calls to Action from the TRC and the principles of UNDRIP.
- Address the findings from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.
- Address the findings from the Special Interlocutor on Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites.

### Climate Crisis and Clean Drinking Water Access

We, along with all the world, bear witness to the woundedness of Creation. We acknowledge that the climate crisis is a worldwide phenomenon that deeply and unequally affects the least and most vulnerable. In Canada, Indigenous siblings are disproportionately affected, with their traditional hunting, fishing, and agricultural territories being impacted. In particular, we are deeply aware of the lack of clean drinking water in Indigenous communities.

Water is life. Therefore, clean water is needed for those communities where the water has been polluted with industrial and human waste. Water for animals is also polluted, which means the

one source of food is no longer available for communities. It seems there is no thought given to the Indigenous communities who depend on the water that is flowing by.

The United Church of Canada calls for:

- Strong and definitive legislation that puts the care of Creation and the mitigation of the effects of the climate crisis as a priority for the country.
- Free, prior, and informed consent from Indigenous communities when planning any development that could impact Indigenous communities' water sources and traditional territories, and adequate evaluation of environmental impact of any such plans.

### Issues Facing Youth and Young Adults: Housing Crisis and Mental Health Crisis

The United Church of Canada is concerned about the increasing challenges youth and young adults are facing in an increasingly unpredictable and uncertain world. Two crises disproportionately affect youth and young adults, particularly those who are racialized, Indigenous, and those in the 2S and LGBTQIA+ communities: mental health and access to affordable housing.

The mental health crisis is being felt across the country and the world. Although everyone struggles with mental health, mental health challenges have been most prevalent in youth and young adults. We are concerned of the high suicide rate within that age demographic. Youth and young adults who are Black, Indigenous, and racialized are over-represented in mental health challenges as well as youth and young adults who identify within the 2S and LGBTQIA+ communities.

The impacts of the housing crisis cannot be separated from the increasing anti-immigrant and racist discourses and behaviours prevalent in Canada. Young people in the United Church are noticing in their communities the impacts of a lack of affordable housing and racist housing policies and practices, especially on Racialized international students. As a church we are called to notice and respond to injustice, and, as young people in the church remind us, we are tasked with fighting now for a better world for us and for future generations to inherit.

Therefore, the United Church calls on all levels of government to:

- Provide adequate resources to address mental health and well-being, with an emphasis on youth and young adults and Racialized, Indigenous, and 2S and LGBTQIA+ communities.
- Identify and remove barriers to affordable and equitable housing, and provide affordable and equitable housing, with an emphasis on youth, young adults, and Racialized, Indigenous, and 2S and LGBTQIA+ communities.

### Overdose Crisis, Harm Reduction

The church upholds the dignity and worth of every human being, all of whom are beloved children of God. We lament the deaths that have occurred through toxic drug supplies, the lack of safe consumption sites, and insufficient social resources to address root causes of illicit substance use and addiction.

We call for all levels of government to:

- Prioritize harm reduction supports including safe consumption sites, healthcare including mental health, affordable housing, poverty reduction, etc., so that all people may be cared for with dignity.

### Increasing Polarization and Erosion of Democracy

The world, including Canada, is experiencing increasing polarization. On top of that, there are serious signs that democratic processes are being deliberately eroded. We witness with dismay the erosion of democracy in the United States and stand with our full communion partners, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, and the United Church of Christ (USA), in resisting threats to democracy and to human rights for all peoples. We notice similar signs of deliberate polarization and creation of suspicion about democratic processes in Canada as well. We recognize that fear and lack of respect are significant factors in these social divisions. And so, we invite Canadians into courageous conversations and deep listening to intentionally build bridges across differences.