

UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS 1925-2025



In 1925 it was common for people to go to church twice on Sunday, morning and evening. We'll have opportunities to do that again in 2025. On May 25 or June 1 there will be usual morning service in most churches, and evening services in 100 or more clusters across Canada. On June 8 we'll all have morning worship in our own sanctuaries (the opportunity for those in participating churches to make special anniversary offerings in envelopes distributed earlier. Then we should all watch an inspiring United Church national / international service in the afternoon time zones across the country, livestreamed from Gower Street United Church in St. John's, NL at 7:00 pm and available that evening and at other times and dates for the future.

In addition to single congregational celebrations, Regional Council events, and national activities, a distinctive characteristic of the 100th anniversary celebrations of 2025 is the large number of cluster celebrations. The first 50 clusters based on plans for Wood Lake Books client congregations are originally described in the Wood Lake book, *Keys to the Kingdom* and developed further in *The Untied Church of Canada* sequel. Clusters then became a chosen vehicle for another 50 hosts, organizing spontaneously with neighbouring communities of faith, now connected and using the Wood Lake model. The number of clusters across the country rose to well above a hundred and a dozen of them amalgamated to become superclusters.

The Wood Lake cluster model has two elements. The first is robust worship on one site, developed in the *Keys* book as a way to feel strength in each other in anticipation of what our moderator calls future "flourishing." The second is anniversary offerings suggested in *The Untied Church* book, aimed at new congregational fiscal strength through congregational endowments.

After the demise of Wood Lake, these agendas were managed by former Wood Lake client congregations and ministers, and Wood Lake authors and retired employees. They all worked through EDGE until it also folded, and then under informal guidance from the United Church Foundation staff, leading to the sponsoring group's identification as Friends of the United Church Foundation, an amorphous countrywide group of organizers.

On Tuesday, June 10, the actual centennial date, anniversary activities will climax in a 90-minute primetime public congregational special service on Vision TV, with participation by 20 of the clusters representing all provinces and the north: (6:00 pm Pacific Time, 7:00 pm Mountain Time, 8:00 pm Central Time, 9:00 pm Eastern Time, 10:00 pm Atlantic Time, and 10:30 pm Newfoundland Time).

Like other great causes for celebrations during the United Church anniversary, the illustration above is featured in *The Untied Church of Canada* book. Women will lead a majority of the anniversary celebrations in the first denomination in the world where females exceed the number of males in active ministry, 52% - 48%, just like the population as a whole. In grateful recognition of our international leadership in gender related matters, a movement for future ordination of Roman Catholic women granted permission for us to use Piasecki's Last Supper in *The Untied Church of Canada* and in this bulletin booklet. And it may also be obtained now from the St. John's Stevensville United Church website and used without fee by all communities of faith in The United Church of Canada when they acknowledge:

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Services on the morning of May 25 or June 1, and all of the clustered services on those evenings, plus the televised service on June 10 employ sections of *A Song of Faith* in a new format, designed for worship for the first time, for use in those morning services, in clusters, and for the June 10 televised service. Bulletin booklets can be produced by well-equipped church offices or local print shops, with cluster partners contributing to the cost at \$1 per copy when printed in bulk, using the template of this bulletin booklet, available on April 15 at www.stjohnsstevensvilleunitedchurch.com

Some congregations gathering on Sunday morning, May 25 or June 1, 2025, are robust, but some are now “lean.” Many of these are now hoping to flourish again, as “lean, green and keen.” Over the last century, most congregations have been reduced by the halving of family sizes, changing local population demographics, and societal attitudes toward formal religion. But most United Churches which ought to be closed or amalgamated may have done so by the 100th anniversary of the United Church, and new congregations are in formation.

These new churches include church plants in British Columbia, urban Indigenous “communities of faith” which had been inner-city “missions” (mainly on the prairies but also in BC and Ontario), as well as new immigrant congregations all over the country, and new franco-phone congregations (or franco-phone majorities arising in older English congregations in Quebec which might have closed were it not for recent franco-phone Catholic transfers and significant numbers of African protestant franco-phone immigrants). So it may now be time to cease our “weeping and wailing and gnashing of dentures” about decline, and to focus on positive developments and on strengths of lean but healthy smaller churches, community mission of remaining dynamic churches, and the moving grandeur of majestic United Churches, many still serving securely in community life and reflecting the glory of God in major Canadian cities. While some members continue to grieve the loss of certain aspects of church life, we hope to initiate new positive appreciation for many of these communities of faith in our anniversary experiences.

In the first service in each congregation’s sanctuary on the morning of May 25 or June 1, those intending to cluster in the evening might use their own liturgies and try some in this bulletin booklet. We invite the use of *All People That on Earth Do Dwell* as the opening hymn on Sunday morning, from the Presbyterian tradition, used at the church union ceremony in 1925. And, to likewise fit the pattern of things to come, we invite the use of *A Song of Faith*, Parts I and II, for the morning service.

In major cities, many towns, some rural areas and Indigenous



100 Choristers, Musicians and Clergy in a Rural Cluster for a June 1 Service

churches, a second service will be taking place on the evening of May 1 or June 1 in clusters of from 3 to 23 congregations in one of the larger sanctuaries, where materials from page 7 of this booklet may be used in full, in part, or adapted. Sections III and IV of *A Song of Faith* might be used, after opening with *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing* from the Methodist tradition in

1925. There may be massed choirs of dozens of choir members, and there are plans for up to a hundred choristers in some of the superclusters.

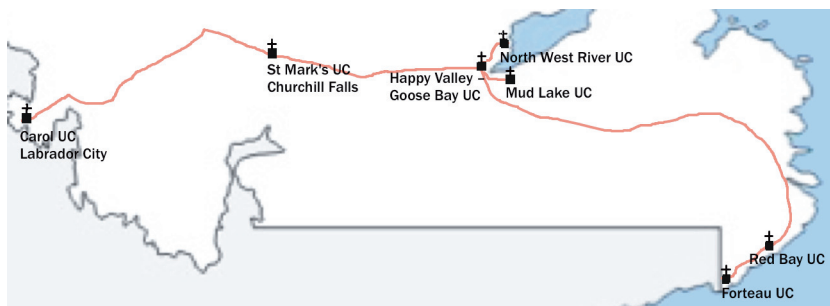
Along with the national service livestreamed on June 8, and perhaps some Regional Council services, these robust congregational cluster celebrations may give us all a feeling of the continuing vitality we share in the United Church as a denomination, ups and downs in institutional life notwithstanding.

Following that national service livestreamed on June 8, the third service developed by the original Wood Lake clientele will be the wrap-up June 10 congregational celebration, televised on Vision TV for shared participation in the homes of church members and others across Canada. Twenty clusters, including over 200 congregations and 5,000 participants in the north and all provinces will be linked to present parts of the televised service.

It will open by recalling our past at St. Andrew’s-Wesley UC on the west coast, zigzag across the country, and close with liturgical dancing into the future at Gower Street UC on the east coast. *En route*, between the opening and the closing, there will be extracts from 18 other services, including greetings from Her Excellency, Governor General Mary Simon at the Crosstown UC cluster in Ottawa, with a response from Her Worship, Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow, on the site of the new United Church and ecumenical national offices at Bloor St. UC, long the mayor’s own congregation.

This service will be widely advertised for ecumenical and interfaith friends, offered to the Canadian public, and presented to all or most members of the United Church of Canada, participating interactively via Vision-TV at home. Employing this bulletin booklet, already used on mornings and evenings, May 25 or June 1 and saved, participating church members are invited to be lifted up by *O God of Bethel* from our Congregationalist heritage in 1925, and all should participate in the responsive readings of *A Song of Faith* (Parts V and VI) at home. Members will be invited to share in holy communion, using tiny packets of bread and wine which may have been

distributed in regular morning worship on June 1 for use on June 10. Or members may take bread and wine from their own fridges to consume with the celebrants on TV, at the same moment right across the country in different time zones for the very first time in history.



1,000 Kilometre Labrador chartered bus routes for 7 congregations gathering in the Happy Valley–Goose Bay cluster on May 25





Doubts about church growth predicted in *The Untied Church*, and in the UC Strategic Plan, were overcome recently as over 100 United Church youth gathered a conference, on the theme *Nous ne sommes plus des étrangers!* (We are no longer strangers!) All francophone, all black, and from African immigrant families. They met at l'Église Unie Plymouth-Trinity in Sherbrooke, Québec, on November 29, 2024. Such growing coteries may continue the current expansions of our denomination with support for racialized and linguistic endowments to be highlighted in anniversary services, like a new francophone ministry beginning in Moncton late in the anniversary year, and L'accueil Église Unie, in Winnipeg, and much more in between in Quebec and Ontario.



100 Black, Francophone, Immigrant Youth Rallying in a Fast Growing Element of United Church Life

In envelopes distributed in previous weeks, anniversary offerings on the morning of June 8 among participants in perhaps as many as two thousand congregations, both clustered and single, may be used for establishment of new Foundational Endowments by The United Church of Canada Foundation, or added to existing endowments of congregations already held by the foundation, or to GICs and other holdings now being transferred to the foundation. June 8 cluster and other offerings for Indigenous, Immigrant and Francophone Foundational Endowments should all be forwarded to the UCC Foundation, separately identified. Cheques should be memoed appropriately and made out to local congregations, whose treasurer will issue receipts and forward funds to The United Church of Canada Foundation.

And why? "Plate offerings" as the only or main source of income for congregations are a relatively new phenomenon. The practice began in Europe some 250 years ago, getting established in North America about 200 years ago, and in most missions around the world subsequently. The church in Sardis, mentioned in the Bible, was the first to have an "endowment" (with which Jewish merchants in that early Christian congregation bought a ship. That church has profited from having a ship down to the present). The ancient church in Lyons built up an investment endowment by urging all members to tithe in their wills. Many rural Anglican churches in England survive on an endowment called a "living" (the priest's salary and housing). In Germany today all church members pay a special tax which the government forwards to denominations for the maintenance of church buildings and ministers' salaries. In Detroit, a Methodist church has a huge parking lot next to the city's main sport stadium from which the congregation derives more than half its revenue, much as some churches in Canada depend on renting space midweek to daycares. Finances are not the first priority of congregations, but a second stream of revenue can insure a future for the first priority in worship and assist in the second priority of service to the community.

The first goal for anniversary services in most of the congregational, Regional, and National services, and in the clustered services, is for us to feel each other's strength in a shared spiritual experience. For many of those in clusters, the second goal is a new fiscal regime in support of congregations and their community missions through endowments to be managed by The United Church of Canada Foundation. In its first twenty years

the UCCF raised and is now holding one hundred million dollars for such purposes, and is renowned for both ethical investments and high rates of return to congregations and others who deposit their money there. "The first hundred million is the hardest."

If every clustered family would make a special anniversary offering of at least \$100, from this amount 40% would help establish or enhance their own congregation's endowment fund, when added to perhaps several larger donations, and transfers of GIC's and other holdings.

The Friends of the Foundation also have several other objectives for the rest of each family's \$100 anniversary offering. The first is a million dollar endowment for The Indigenous Church through gifts of \$20 or more each, from perhaps 50,000 families worshipping in a thousand congregations in over a hundred clusters and others. Another objective is the raising of \$1,000,000 through at least \$20 per family for an endowment in support of new racialized African and Asian diaspora congregations. A final goal is for each family or for individuals to contribute \$20 toward an already established endowment fund for L'Église Unie du Canada, raising it to over one-million-dollars.

These things can all happen within the \$100 or more per family. Cheques should be made out to local congregations whose treasurer will issue receipts and forward funds to endowments set up by The United Church of Canada Foundation. In churches where the amount to be dedicated to the congregation's own endowment fund is less than \$1,000, the treasurers should assume discretionary powers to deposit the money to the local church's own Memorial Fund or buy a GIC.

Many people are struggling financially these days. But United Church members in many communities are also among those donating generously to the endowment of local hospitals, to their alma mater universities, as well as for hockey rink endowments, libraries and public parks. We invite families with greater means, and individuals with financial acumen, to consider donating more significant gifts and bequests, even million-dollar or multi-million-dollar legacies to the Foundational Endowments of the congregations they love, or for other United Church agencies and institutions such as colleges, chaplaincies, lay training centres, church camps, and specialized services. They should consult with The United Church Foundation endowment specialist Karen Seunarine at 1-800-268- 3781 x622, and with their own lawyer.

Old Wood Lakers, former EDGERS, and previous UCCF advisors, all now Friends of the Foundation, are sending this booklet and offering envelopes to all churches in clusters, and also to all other congregations, imagining that some of its worship resources and shared goals may be of value in a variety of contexts. They may not all suit some who say they are too remote to cluster ... though congregations all the way to Bermuda are welcome to "cluster" online with Whitehorse United Church during the evening of June 1, for a service posted early enough in the day to serve all Canadian time zones by evening.

– Brian Arthur Brown, author of *The Untied Church of Canada*, and chair of Friends of the United Church Foundation.





A SONG OF FAITH

PART I

PART II

God is Holy Mystery, beyond complete knowledge, above perfect description. Yet, in love, the one eternal God seeks relationship.

God creates the universe and with it the possibility of being and relating. God tends the universe, mending the broken, reconciling the estranged.

God enlivens the universe, guiding all things toward harmony with their Source. Grateful for God's loving action, we cannot keep from singing.

With the Church through the ages, we speak of God as one and triune:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We also speak of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer; God, Christ, and Spirit; Mother, Friend, and Comforter; Source of Life, Living Word, and Bond of Love,

And in other ways that speak faithfully of the One on whom our hearts rely, the fully shared life at the heart of the universe.

We witness to Holy Mystery that is Wholly Love. God is creative and self-giving, generously moving in all the near and distant corners of the universe.

Nothing exists that does not find its source in God. Our first response to God's providence is gratitude. We sing thanksgiving.

Finding ourselves in a world of beauty and mystery, of living things, diverse and interdependent, of complex patterns of growth and evolution, of subatomic particles and cosmic swirls,

We sing of God the Creator, the Maker and Source of all that is.

Each part of creation reveals unique aspects of God the Creator, who is in creation and beyond it. All of creation, animate and inanimate, is related.

All creation is good. We sing of the Creator, who made humans to live and move and have their being in God.

In and with God, we direct our lives toward right relationship with each other and with God. We can discover our place as one strand in the web of life. We grow in wisdom and compassion. We recognize all people as kin.

We can accept our mortality and finitude, not as a curse, but as a challenge to make our lives and choices matter.

Made in the image of God, we yearn for fulfillment that is life in God. Yet we choose to turn away from God. We surrender ourselves to sin,

A disposition revealed in selfishness, cowardice, or apathy.

Becoming bound and complacent in a web of false desires and wrong choices,

We bring harm to ourselves and others.

This brokenness in human life and community is an outcome of sin.

Sin is not only personal but accumulates to become habitual and systemic forms of injustice, violence, and hatred.

We are all touched by brokenness:

The rise of selfish individualism that erodes human solidarity; Concentration of wealth and power without regard for the needs of all; toxins of religious and ethnic bigotry.

Degradation of the blessedness of human bodies and human passions through sexual exploitation;

The delusions of unchecked progress and limitless growth that threaten our home, the earth;

Covert despair that lulls many into numb complicity with empires and systems of domination.

We sing lament and repentance. Yet evil does not, cannot, undermine or overcome the love of God.

God forgives, and calls all of us to confess our fears and failings with honesty and humility.

God reconciles and calls us to repent the part we have played in damaging our world, ourselves, and each other.

God transforms, and calls us to protect the vulnerable, to pray for deliverance from evil, to work with God for healing of the world,

That all might have abundant life. We sing of grace.



PART III

The fullness of life includes moments of unexpected inspiration and courage lived out, experiences of beauty, truth, and goodness, blessings of seeds and harvest, friendship and family, intellect and sexuality,

The reconciliation of persons through justice and communities living in righteousness, and the articulation of meaning.

We sing of God the Spirit, who from the beginning has swept over the face of creation, animating all energy and matter and moving in human hearts.

We sing of God the Spirit, faithful and untameable, creatively and redemptively active in the world.

The Spirit challenges us to celebrate the holy, not only in what is familiar, but also in that which seems foreign.

We sing of the Spirit, who speaks our prayers of deepest longing, and enfolds our concerns and confessions, transforming us and the world.

We offer worship outpouring gratitude and awe, opening ourselves to God's still, small voice of comfort, God's rushing whirlwind of challenge.

In word, music, art, and sacrament, in community and in solitude, God changes our lives, our relationships, and our world. We sing with trust.

Scripture is our song for the journey, the living word passed on from generation to generation to guide and inspire,

That we might wrestle a holy revelation for our time and place from the human experiences and cultural assumptions of another era.

God calls us to be doers of the word and not hearers only.

The Spirit breathes revelatory power into scripture, bestowing upon it a unique and normative place in the life of community.

The Spirit judges us critically when we abuse scripture by interpreting it narrow-mindedly, using it as a tool of oppression, exclusion, or hatred.

The wholeness of scripture testifies to the oneness and faithfulness of God.

The multiplicity of scripture testifies to its depth: Two testaments, four gospels, contrasting points of view held in tension;

All a faithful witness to the One and Triune God, the Holy Mystery that is Wholly Love.

PART IV

We find God made known in Jesus of Nazareth;

We sing of God the Christ, the Holy One embodied.

We sing of Jesus, a Jew, born to a woman in poverty in a time of social upheaval and political oppression.

He knew human joy and sorrow.

So filled with the Holy Spirit was he, that in him people experienced the presence of God among them.

We sing praise to God incarnate.

Jesus announced the coming of God's reign – a commonwealth not of domination, but of peace, justice, and reconciliation.

He healed the sick and fed the hungry.

He forgave sins and freed those held captive by all manner of demonic powers.

He crossed barriers of race, class, culture, and gender.

He preached and practiced unconditional love – love of God, love of neighbour, love of friend, love of enemy –

And he commanded his followers to love one another as he had loved them.

Because his witness to love was threatening, those exercising power sought to silence Jesus.

He suffered abandonment and betrayal, state-sanctioned torture and execution. He was crucified.

But death was not the last word. God raised Jesus from death, turning sorrow into joy, despair into hope.

We sing of Jesus raised from the dead. We sing hallelujah.

By becoming flesh in Jesus, God makes all things new.

In Jesus' life, teaching, and self-offering, God empowers us to live in love.

In Jesus' crucifixion, God bears the sin, grief, and suffering of the world.

In Jesus' resurrection, God overcomes death.

Nothing separates us from the love of God.

The Risen Christ lives today, present to us and the source of our hope.

In response to who Jesus was and to all he did and taught, to his life, death, and resurrection, And to his continuing presence with us through the Spirit,

We celebrate him as the Word made flesh, the one in whom God and humanity are perfectly joined, the transformation of our lives, the Christ.



PART V

We sing of a church seeking to continue the story of Jesus by embodying Christ's presence in the world.

We are called together by Christ as a community of broken but hopeful believers, loving what he loved, living what he taught, striving to be faithful servants of God in our time and place.

Our ancestors in faith bequeath to us experiences of their faithful living;

Upon their lives our lives are built.

Our living of the gospel makes us part of the communion of saints,

Experiencing fulfillment in God's reign, actively anticipating a new heaven and a new earth.

The church has not always lived up to its vision.

It requires the Spirit to reorient it, helping it to live an emerging faith while honouring tradition, challenging it to live by grace rather than entitlement, for we are called to be a blessing to the earth.

We sing of God's good news lived out, a church with purpose:

faith nurtured and hearts comforted, gifts shared for the good of all,

resistance to the forces that exploit and marginalize,

fierce love in the face of violence, human dignity defended, members of a community held and inspired by God.

Corrected and comforted, instrument of the loving Spirit of Christ, creation's mending.

We sing of God's mission.

We are each given particular gifts of the Spirit. For the sake of the world, God calls all followers of Jesus to Christian ministry.

In the church, some are called to specific ministries of leadership, both lay and ordered; some witness to the good news; some uphold the art of worship;

Some comfort the grieving and guide the wandering;

some build up the community of wisdom;

some stand with the oppressed and work for justice.

To embody God's love in the world, the work of the church requires the ministry and discipleship of all believers.

In grateful response to God's abundant love, we bear in mind our integral connection to the earth and to each other.

We participate in God's work of healing and mending creation.

PART VI

To point to the presence of the holy in the world, the church receives, consecrates, and shares visible signs of the grace of God. With churches of the Reformed and Methodist traditions, we celebrate two sacraments as gifts of Christ: baptism and holy communion.

In these sacraments the ordinary things of life – water, bread, wine – point beyond themselves to God and God's love, teaching us to be alert to the sacred in the midst of life.

Before conscious thought or action on our part, we are born into the brokenness of this world. Before thought or action we are surrounded by God's redeeming love.

Baptism by water in the name of the Holy Trinity is the means by which we are received, at any age, into the covenanted community of church.

It is the ritual that signifies our rebirth in faith and cleansing by the power of God.

Baptism signifies the nurturing, sustaining, transforming power of God's love and our grateful response to that grace.

Carrying a vision of creation healed and restored, we welcome all in the name of Christ.

Invited to the table where none shall go hungry, we gather as Christ's guests and friends.

In holy communion we are commissioned to feed as we have been fed, to forgive as we have been forgiven, to love as we have been loved.

The open table speaks of shining promises: barriers broken and creation healed.

In the communion meal, wine poured out and bread broken, we remember Jesus. We remember not only the promise but also the price that he paid for who he was, for what he did and said, and for the world's brokenness.

We taste the mystery of God's great love for us, and are renewed in faith and hope. We place our hope in God.

We sing of life beyond life and a future good beyond imagining: a new heaven and a new earth, the end of sorrow, pain, and tears, Christ's return and life with God, the making new of all things.

We yearn for the coming of that future, even while participating in eternal life now. Divine creation does not cease until all things have found wholeness, union, and integration with the common ground of all being.

As children of the Timeless One, our time-bound lives will find completion in the all-embracing Creator. We embrace the present, embodying hope, loving our enemies, caring for the earth, choosing life.

Grateful for God's loving action, we cannot keep from singing. Creating and seeking relationship, in awe and trust, we witness to Holy Mystery, Who is Wholly Love.

SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP FOR UNITED CHURCH CONGREGATIONS
IN CLUSTERS, MAY 25, JUNE 1, OR JUNE 8, 2025

For use in whole or in part, or adapted to local needs, with clusters recording for telecasting on June 10 making additions based on the service on page 8 as appropriate.)

Earth Sanctus composed by Bruce Harding, led by massed choirs using music from *The Untied Church* book, also found at www.evensong.ca. This should be screened up. Some clusters may be using another Sanctus chosen by local musicians.

Call to Worship (2 ministers; responses in **bold** by people):
Aussi chantons-nous une Église qui cherche à poursuivre l'histoire de Jésus, en donnant corps à la présence du Christ dans le monde.

We are called together by Christ as a community of broken but hopeful believers, loving what he loved, living what he taught, striving to be faithful servants of God in our time and place.

Nos ancêtres dans la foi nous léguent leurs expériences de vie de fidélité; c'est sur leurs vies que nos vies se construisent.

Our living of the gospel makes us a part of this communion of saints, experiencing the fulfillment of God's reign, even as we actively anticipate a new heaven and a new earth.

L'Église n'a pas toujours été fidèle à sa vision. Elle a besoin de l'Esprit pour se renouveler,

Helping it to live an emerging faith while honouring tradition, challenging it to live by grace rather than entitlement, for we are called to be a blessing to the earth.

De même chantons-nous la Bonne Nouvelle de Dieu vécue dans une Église qui s'emploie ...

Faith nurtured and hearts comforted, gifts shared for the good of all, resistance to forces that exploit and marginalize, fierce love in the face of violence, human dignity defended, a community held and inspired by God, corrected and comforted, instruments of the loving Spirit of Christ, creation's mending.

Indigenous traditional land acknowledgements

Opening Prayer The Lord's Prayer reflecting multicultural realities of Canada and The United Church (various ministers using simple phonetic pronunciation, and people in **bold**):
Oneh taonkâ:ti ne aònhwí:io tsi enhón (Mohawk)

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Tipei nhasi zvekudya zvedu zvemisi yese. (Zimbabwean)

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

At huwag Mo kaming ipahintulot sa tukso, At iadya Mo kami sa lahat ng masama. (Filipino Tagalog)

For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Hymn of Praise: *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing* (Methodist hymn in 1925 church union service)

Greetings by raising of hands upon invitation by any who brought traditions from Canada and around the world into the United Church, including Indigenous, French Huguenot, Dutch Reformed, Swiss Reformed, Hungarian Reformed, Scottish Presbyterians, Irish, English, Welsh and Italian Methodists, American and Black Congregationalists, Canadian visible, linguistic, and ethnic minority churches, including African, Japanese, Chinese, Taiwanese, Korean, Filipino, South Asian, South Pacific, Spanish, and Portuguese – whoever is present.

Greetings by raising of hands by community representatives such as civic leaders and officials from organizations with whom the congregations are engaged, mission partners, renters, and cooperating neighbours. Greetings could also include any available representatives of denominations coming into church union since June 10, 1925, including congregations of Wesleyan Methodists in Bermuda in 1930, and Evangelical United Brethren in Ontario in 1968, plus the several congregations of Christian Church Disciples, Wisconsin Synod Lutherans, Alberta Church of the Brethren, Armenian Evangelical, Evangelical and Reformed, Independent Presbyterian, Welsh Presbyterian, Reformed Episcopal, Reformed Church of America, and German Evangelical, all now United.

Greetings by raising of hands by officials or staff from Regional Councils and the national office of the United Church. Participants in the service may include clergy, choirs, and members of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. In some places a Presbyterian minister may share in preaching to recognize overdue reconciliation between The Presbyterian Church in Canada and The United Church of Canada (an ecumenical gesture and an anniversary goal for many historically Presbyterian families in the United Church and their continuing Presbyterian relatives).

Offering: Distribution of additional envelopes for use in anniversary offerings at June 8 morning services or at any other time

Offertory Anthem (New from *Then Let Us Sing*, to be selected by local musicians, performed by massed choirs.

Offertory Prayer

Scriptures Hebrew: Isaiah 40: 1-8 (optional), Muslim: Surah 5:112-113 (optional), and Christian: John 1:1-14

Sermon *Word of God, Word Made Flesh, and Word on the Street* This "three-point sermon" on The Word of God in Scripture, The Word made flesh in Jesus, and The Word as proclaimed prophetically in the church, includes sections III and IV of *A Song of Faith*, read responsively. This sermon might consist of seven minutes preaching on the first point before the first responsive reading from Part III of *A Song of Faith*, followed by seven minutes of preaching on the second point before the second reading, Part IV of *A Song of Faith*, and seven minutes at its conclusion, all five portions flowing smoothly together, including one or up to three preachers.

Hymn of Service (New from *Then Let Us Sing*, yet to be selected by local musicians)

Benediction (2 ministers alternating in English and French)
Nos voix unies, nous avons célébré le culte et appris du passé. Reaffirming our commitment to deep spirituality, bold discipleship and daring justice.

Maintenant, ce service d'adoration est terminé, et notre service au monde recommence.

Go with the grace of God, the Father, the compassion of Jesus, the Son, and the wisdom of our sister, the Holy Spirit.

Earth Amen (Massed choirs using anniversary music by Bruce Harding found on his website at www.evensong.ca)



NATIONAL CENTENNIAL SERVICE OF CONGREGATIONS

JUNE 10, 2025, ON VISION TV

(6 pm Pacific Time, 7 pm Mountain Time, 8 pm Central Time, 9 pm Eastern, 10 pm Atlantic, 10:30 pm NL Time) and permanently on YouTube

Welcome from St. Andrew's-Wesley United Church, Vancouver

Earth Sanctus by Bruce Harding – lead by clustered massed choir

Call to Worship Rev. Rhian Walker & Rev. Dan Chambers of St. Andrew's-Wesley at Pacific Mountain Region Celebration *Cent Ans! De partenariat mondial et national, de relations oecuméniques et interconfessionnelles*
Appropriately enough, in a hockey arena on Mutual Street in Toronto, this United Church of ours was brought to life in 1925. Gathered as Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and others, as Christians united, they journeyed on together. *Un millier de voix se sont élevées pour chanter la foi d'une génération, Et cette foi résonne encore dans les voix de nos enfants.*

Informed by the past, with eyes to the future, today we walk a path of reconciliation with each other and God's creation. *Avec une table qui ne cesse de s'agrandir, Nous offrons un accueil exubérant et une hospitalité radicale.*

We are called to worship with deep spirituality, bold discipleship and daring justice.

Nous sommes appelés à adorer, avec une spiritualité profonde, une vie de disciple dynamique et une quête audacieuse de justice.

From The Rock to The Rockies, From Qikiqtaaluk to Point Pelee, We are called into worship.

Dans la joie et la célébration, le chagrin et la lamentation, Nous sommes appelés à l'adoration.

Invocation Ululation Rev. Tazvi Nyarota, with Edmonton Cluster

Beyond Land Recognition Rev. Kimberly Roy at the Indigenous Goodfish Lake United Church, hosting a northeastern Alberta cluster service, with verses from the new Mohawk Bible, fostered by the United Churches of Kanesatake and Kahnawake in Quebec.

Hymn *O God of Bethel* a congregationalist hymn from the 1925 union service, led by choirs clustered in Toronto at Rosedale United Church, which was a Congregationalist Church in 1925.

Greetings Presented by Her Excellency The Rt. Hon. Governor General Mary Simons from Ottawa's Congregational cluster at Centretown United Church

Response Her Worship Olivia Chow, from site of Toronto's new United & ecumenical church offices at Bloor St. United Church, the mayor's own congregation

Anthem *The Waters of Babylon* by Arvo Pärt, massed choirs at Metropolitan UC, Toronto, a former Methodist Church

Confession Selection B on page 928 of *Voices United*, screened up at Rosedale United Church in Toronto

Kyrie Eleison Russian Orthodox liturgy at Voices United # 946 led by massed choirs at the Rosedale UC cluster in Toronto

Assurance of Pardon by The Rev. Dr. Kristin Philipson, Rosedale United Church

Psalm 117 a solo by Erin Inglis of St. John's Stevensville United Church, formerly a German speaking congregation of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, performed at St. Andrew's United Church in Niagara Falls, a former Presbyterian Church

Christian Scriptures John 17: 1-22 by Rev. Frances Kitson, Whitehorse UC, founded in the boom in 1954

Responsive Reading *A Song of Faith* Part V led by Rev. Debra Berg and cluster at McClure UC, Saskatoon, SK

Sermon: Part I *The Church as the Body of Christ*, The Very Rev. Marion Parly in the cluster at Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL

Responsive Reading *A Song of Faith* Part VI, by Rev. Dr. John Moses, Rev. Doreen Daley and cluster at Trinity United Church, Charlottetown, PEI

Sermon: Part II *God in Christ, Present and Among Us* by The Very Rev. David Giuliano at the Essex County, Ontario cluster

Offering Announcement Sarah Charters, President, Executive Officer, Philanthropy and President of the United Church of Canada Foundation, at Kingston Road Cluster in Toronto

Offertory *Da Pacem* by Arvo Pärt, by massed choirs directed by Jonathan Oldengarm at Metropolitan UC, Toronto ON

Presentation of Offering VU # 308 *Many and Great are your Works O God* with drumming at Knox United Church, Winnipeg, MB

Offertory Prayer & Smudging Rev. Connie Budd of Raymond Flett Indigenous Church in the chapel of Knox UC, W'peg, MB

The Lord's Prayer multilingual version (Bulletin Booklet page 7) by cluster at North Bramalea UC in Brampton, ON

HOLY COMMUNION led by a cluster of ministers and people of 20 United Churches in Essex County, Ontario at Gesstwood United Church Camp and Retreat Centre, with distribution to clusters at Toronto Chinese UC, Happy Valley-Goose Bay UC and received in homes across Canada

Dedication of *Then Let Us Sing* at First United Church in Truro, NS by editor Lloyd MacLean

Hymn of Service from *Then Let Us Sing*, led by choirs and people in the cluster at First United Church in Truro, NS

Benediction led by Rev. Trevor Potter, and clergy at McKillop United Church in Lethbridge, AB
Nous mettons notre espérance en Dieu. Aussi chantons nous la vie au-delà de la vie.

The future is good beyond imagining: a new heaven and a new earth, the end of sorrow, pain, and tears, Christ's return and life with God making all things new.

Nous anticipons la venue de ce temps, tout en goûtant dès à présent à la vie éternelle.

Divine creation does not cease until all have found wholeness, union, and integration with the common ground of all being. As children of the Timeless One, our time-bound lives will find completion in the Creator's embrace.

Pendant ce temps, nous saisissons le présent, donnant corps à l'espérance, aimant nos ennemis, prenant grand soin de la terre, choisissant la vie.

Creating and seeking relationship, in awe and trust, we witness to Holy Mystery, Who is Wholly Love.

Earth Amen by Bruce Harding for the 100th anniversary in the beauty of holiness tintinnabuli style of Arvo Pärt

Liturgical Dance *Relationships* by Arvo Pärt – Gower Street United Church, St. John's, NL, dancing into the future