



July 26, 2006

The Rev. Dr. James H. Sinclair
General Secretary, General Council
The United Church of Canada
3250 Bloor Street West, Suite 300
Toronto, Ontario,
Canada M8X 2Y4

Dear Rev. Sinclair:

I am writing you on behalf of the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) to encourage the General Council of the United Church of Canada to secure appropriate funding for the Central Archives of the United Church of Canada. Established in 1975, the ACA is a national association representing English-speaking archivists in Canada. With headquarters in Ottawa, the ACA's mandate is to provide the archival profession leadership and to facilitate an understanding and appreciation of archival heritage across the country.

I understand that three of the five Ontario Conferences have given notice to withdraw from their covenant with Victoria University concerning their archival records and that this represents a loss of \$85,000 annually to the Central Archives of the United Church of Canada. The scope of this loss amounts to a serious setback to the Central Archives program. The ACA urges you and the General Council to find a solution to this problem so as not to compromise an invaluable archival resource.

The Central Archives plays a vital legal and administrative role in the United Church of Canada. By preserving and protecting the national records of the United Church of Canada, its antecedent denominations, as well as those of the Conferences, Presbyteries and Pastoral Charges in Ontario, the Central Archives sustains the consistent stewardship of the Church's invaluable corporate memory. Without the adequate financial support required to ensure their long-term management and preservation, the United Church's documentary resources are seriously compromised.

Since 1953, the Central Archives of the United Church of Canada has been a component of Canada's cultural life. Archival evidence of the decisions, policies, and activities of the United Church of Canada provide comprehensive documentation of the issues facing the Church and Canadian society as a whole. Furthermore, baptism, marriage, and burial registers record the vital events of individual congregational members' lives. Indeed, the United Church of Canada / Victoria University Archives serves more than 3600 researchers each year through personal visits, telephone calls, and written inquiries. Users include academics, students, local church historians, genealogists, journalists, Church and University administrators, and private individuals. Researchers come from all parts of the world.



The local, provincial, national and international archival community has also greatly benefited from the immense leadership, expertise, and example provided by the Central Archives. The United Church of Canada / Victoria University Archives maintains a superb facility, renowned for its admirable implementation of archival standards, excellent public services, and high degree of accessibility to the public. A model for other archives, the Central Archives has hosted visiting archivists and dignitaries from around the world.

The ACA is aware of the United Church of Canada's fiscal constraints, but surely a solution can be found to resolve this dilemma without imposing drastic measures on the Central Archives' excellent program. The Central Archives of the United Church of Canada supports legal, administrative, and cultural endeavours. It deserves the necessary resources to sustain this work; anything less would be an abdication of the responsibility to preserve and to protect the United Church's collective memory.

The United Church of Canada - Canada's largest Protestant and uniquely Canadian denomination - has been a leader in religious archives for over fifty years. I am happy to discuss the ACA's concerns further with you and any others working towards a solution; please contact me at via e-mail at scott.goodine@gov.ab.ca or via phone at (780) 427-8773.

Best Regards,

Scott Goodine
President

cc. Dr. Paul Gooch, Victoria University
Jim Lewis, Committee on Archives & History