

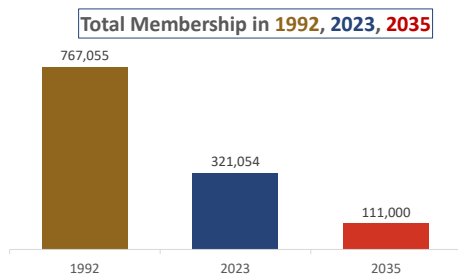
Lunch and Learn
March 22, 2026

Toward 2035
A initiative by The United Church of Canada

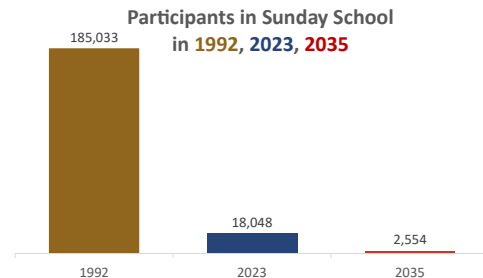
Toward 2035 is a hope-filled strategy for the future of our church. It is grounded in reality and inspired by our call to discipleship.

Hope-filled
Grounded in Reality
Our call to discipleship

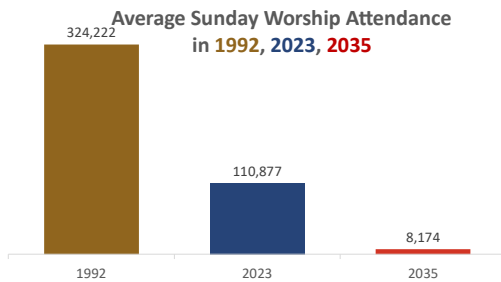
Total Membership



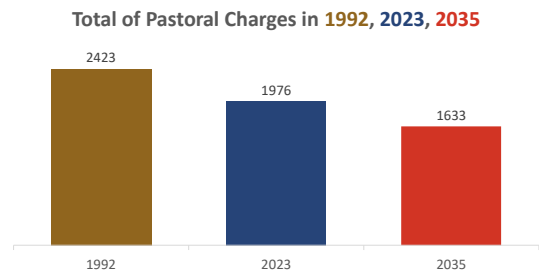
Participants in Sunday School



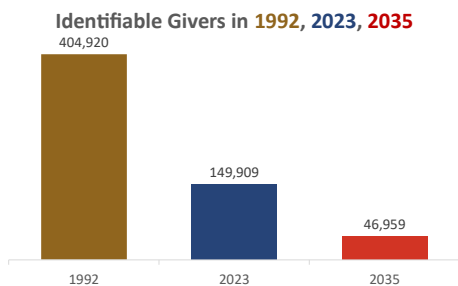
Average Sunday Worship Attendance



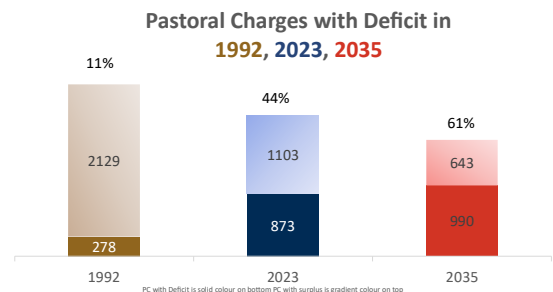
Total of Pastoral Charges



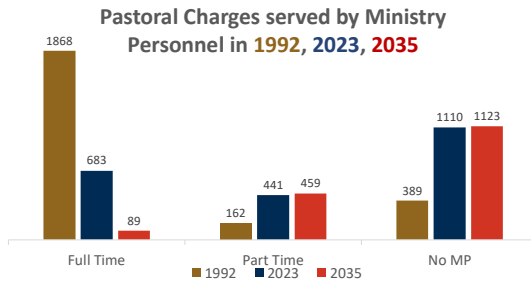
Identifiable Givers



Pastoral Charges Financially Vulnerable



Pastoral Charges Served by Ministry Personnel



What has been hard to hear so far?

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. –*Song of Faith*

link to video on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nZPoPkrRYw&list=PLYOZZpcZfoZ4XGic50eufsTq0QoQ5i72f>

The church is called to embody Christ's presence.

What about the work of witness of the United Church have you experienced in your life that you fear would be lost to our community should there no longer be a United Church presence in your area?

What are our strengths and gifts as Newcastle United Church?

What are the strengths and gifts of neighbouring United Churches?

The church is a community of hopeful, but broken believers.

“The unchurched don’t want to be told what to believe, how to believe it and what to do and how to do it”

“The evangelism perspective that we offer is a safe place to be broken, but hopeful”

What is Newcastle United Church’s brand of evangelism?

The church is called to be the church in our particular time and place.

Going to church is “no longer about social acceptance or prestige”.

Why do you go to church?

What is today’s context in Newcastle?

Who are we serving?

Éric Hébert-Daly says: “Come to our church so you can pay for us to continue doing what we’ve always done” He also says: “We want people to get their needs met on our terms.”

Do you think these statements are true? If it is true, how might we go about meeting the spiritual needs in our community?

What are we about?

Éric Hébert-Daly says: “We think our buildings are our ministry”

What is your reaction to this statement?

Éric Hébert-Daly says: “Sometimes we assume that justice means that we become a non-profit organization and try to meet needs that way”

“Our unique selling proposition is going to be different than a non-profit organization”

How are we different from a non-profit organization?

What non-profit organizations in our community are already doing a good job around caring for our community?

Do we believe there is a future?

Éric Hébert-Daly says: “There is an assumption at the cultural level of the United Church of Canada that we are done.”

When you think about the United Church in our area, are you confident that it will be present 10 years from now.

How about the United Church in Clarington or Durham?

Éric Hébert-Daly says: “A lot more Pastoral Charges with a lot less people is going to mean a lot more fatigue and a lot more spinning of wheels. So, can we let go of what we think a community of faith has to look like to be able to offer the true body of Christ with all the different parts?”

What is your reaction to this statement?

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Our call to discipleship

Canadian theologian Sarah Travis writes about how we are church, “Hope for the church, I believe, is located not in the possibility of returning home but in the fact that we have been released for something new.”

Sarah Travis, *Metamorphosis: Preaching after Christendom* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2019)

Éric Hébert-Daly says: “There is something about acknowledging reality that liberates something in us”

What is your reaction to this statement?

Have you seen any positive signs, such as new shoots of growth?

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Our call to discipleship

In the United Church of Canada, **inspired, resilient, diverse contextual communities of disciples**, coast to coast to coast, urban and rural continue the story of Jesus, by embodying Christ's presence in our time and place.

Closing Prayer:

Gracious and loving God
You called into being, this United Church of Canada,
One expression of Jesus' Beloved community
Here in the particularities
Of our place and our time.
For the past 100 years
You have guided and sustained
And called us back when we have erred.
Now, as we look back
We also look forward,
Daring to believe
That even among us
Even in this very place
You are doing a new thing.
We long to perceive it
Like a way through a wilderness
For the sake of our neighbours
For the sake of this world of beautiful
And broken things
Yearning to be made whole
Yearning to be made new
May we perceive and live into it. Amen.