



## The United Church of Canada: A History

Don Schweitzer, editor

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Engaged with the present and looking to the future, The United Church of Canada has paid scant attention to its past, as have most academic historians. But the church, Canada, and the church's role within Canadian society have altered drastically since church union in 1925. Now Don Schweitzer has assembled an excellent group of scholars to tell the story. Readers within the denomination can learn from the past and find resources to develop a vision for the future, while all readers will gain deeper understanding of Canada during the past century. A perceptive and readable study.

– Marilyn Färdig Whiteley, author of *Canadian Methodist Women, 1766–1925: Marys, Marthas, Mothers in Israel* (WLU Press, 2005)

The publication of *The United Church of Canada* should be noted as one of the most significant milestones in the documentation and exploration of the history of Christianity in Canada. This volume not only explores the origins of the unique ecumenical project that is the UCC but, perhaps more importantly, bravely confronts its key movements, conversations, and contributions in the story of Canadian political and religious history. The contributing authors provide the reader with a rich dialectic in perspective, tone, and interpretation that significantly enhances the impact of the volume. Given the importance of The United Church to the discourse of Canadian nation-making, this work is a must-read for those who seek not only to understand the history of Christianity in North America but to engage the conversation of religion and culture, politics and power, meaning-making and societal well-becoming as we reorder our discourse of selfhood in a transnational environment.

– Wendy Fletcher, Vancouver School of Theology, author of *Like Water on Rock: Gender Integration in Canadian Anglicanism* (2002)

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From its inception in the early 1900s, The United Church of Canada set out to become the national church of Canada. This book recounts and analyzes the history of the church of Canada's largest Protestant denomination and its engagement with issues of social and private morality, evangelistic campaigns, and its response to the restructuring of religion in the 1960s.

A chronological history is followed by chapters on the United Church's worship, theology, understanding of ministry, relationships with the Canadian Jewish community, Israel, and Palestinians, changing mission goals in relation to First Nations peoples, and changing social imaginary.

The result is an original, accessible, and engaging account of The United Church of Canada's pilgrimage that will be useful for students, historians, and general readers. From this account there emerges a complex portrait of the United Church as a distinctly Canadian Protestant church shaped by both its Christian faith and its engagement with the changing society of which it is a part.

**Don Schweitzer** was ordained in The United Church of Canada in 1982 and settled at Turtle River Larger Parish in Saskatchewan Conference northwest of North Battleford, Saskatchewan. In 1987 he left to pursue doctoral studies in theology at Princeton Theological Seminary. In 1991 he was settled along with Leslie Schweitzer (née Goodwin) at Wesley United Church in Prince Albert. He and Leslie have two sons, Simon and Ian. Since 2000 he has taught theology at St. Andrew's College in Saskatoon. Don Schweitzer is a past president of the Canadian Theological Society. He is co-editor with Derek Simon of *Intersecting Voices: Critical Theologies in a Land of Diversity* (2004) and the author of *Contemporary Christologies* (2010).

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