

Affirming Minute - United Church of Canada Apology to 2S and LGBTQIA+ People Oct 2025

Good Morning.

In the Lord's Prayer we say " Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us." Asking forgiveness and giving forgiveness are both hard things to do; maybe that's why Jesus includes forgiveness in such an important prayer.

This past August at the United Church's 45th General Council in Calgary, the church issued an apology to 2SLGBTQ+ people at a special service conducted by Rt. Rev. Carmen Lansdowne, moderator of the United Church. Here are a few of the key points our moderator spoke in this service of apology:

We offer this apology not because we're convinced we have everything figured out but because we refuse to let fear keep us silent, nor do we wish for perfectionism to overtake the necessary task of publicly and explicitly addressing the legacy of 2S and LGBTQIA+ oppression and discrimination in The United Church of Canada.

We, The United Church of Canada, express our deepest apologies to all those who have experienced homophobia, transphobia and biphobia within The United Church of Canada, at times the church's actions caused loss of income, harassment, being denied access to church leadership, and threats to personal safety.

[These negative experiences] have not only hurt individuals but loved ones as well, including friends, families and fellow siblings in Christ.

The church should be a place of sanctuary and belonging for all people. You deserve a church that reflects God's unconditional and abiding love.

After the apology, there was a ritual blessing of water, which was shared with the entire congregation by the Moderator and Rev. Michael Blair, the general secretary of the United Church, and other volunteers. Then the whole congregation joined together in an African song expressing joy and determination to never give up.

We will share the link to the full service and apology in next week's e-blast.

As an Affirming Church we have an ongoing responsibility to continue to learn and grow in our understanding of how to be truly welcoming, accepting and supportive of all God's people.

Thank you.