

The United Church of Canada Draft Apology to 2S and LGBTQIA+ Communities

An Apology to Members of the 2S & LGBTQIA+ Communities Harmed by The United Church of Canada

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Key summary: Recognizing the need for apologies to be lived into with action, The United Church of Canada offers the following statement in response to the findings of Iridesce: The Living Apology Project and the 2011 National LGBT Consultation.

To all 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals who currently are or have previously been connected with The United Church of Canada,

Over the past decade the Church has engaged in intentional listening processes to better understand the experiences of 2SLGBTQIA+ people within The United Church of Canada. We have engaged in prayer, reflection, art, listening, community building, and more through a National GLBTT Consultation (2011) and Iridesce: The Living Apology Project (2017-2019). We are grateful for each story that has been shared and hold with sadness the large reality that there are still many stories of harm left untold.

In response to these stories, we would like to express our deepest apologies to all those who have experienced homophobia, transphobia, and/or biphobia within The United Church of Canada. This has at times looked like overt actions such as: loss of income, harassment, being denied access to church leadership, and threats to personal safety. The church should be a place of sanctuary and belonging for all people. You deserved a church that reflected God's unconditional and abiding love.

Homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia has also been present in the times when we remained silent or ignorant instead of actively ensuring policies of inclusion and welcome were being lived out in communities of faith, presbyteries, regions, and at the national level of the church. We recognize that 2SLGBTQIA+ members of The United Church of Canada have experienced feelings of abandonment when feeling unsafe or unable to access support and care navigating homophobic, biphobic, and/or transphobic church environments.

Moving forward, we recognize that change is required in the hearts and minds throughout The United Church of Canada and also through actions taken at an institutional level.

Accountability:

In response to all that we have learned, and are continuing to learn, we humbly commit ourselves to upholding and fulfilling the recommendations of the "Living Apology into Action" statement issued by the Iridesce Working Group to the General Secretary of the UCC in February of 2023.
