

United Church of Canada People Compared with Canada's Population

The following charts compare selected data for the United Church of Canada compared with similar data for Canada's population as a whole.

The comparison shows how Canadians as a whole are participating in the United Church of Canada, and suggests possible changes in Canadian culture as a whole.

Rates of participation by Canadians in the United Church of Canada as shown by Membership, Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals have all shown steady decline since at least the mid-1960's with the exception of a temporary increase from 1980-1990 as the Baby Boom Generation returned with their children.

These trends have been noted for all churches (including evangelical ones) throughout North America. Secular volunteer agencies also report similar declines.

The charts indicate that the religious rituals of weddings, baptisms, and funerals are in decline as an increasingly secular and "spiritual, but not religious" culture no longer looks to organized religion for these life-changing transitions.

Clearly the United Church is not "of" Canada. Perhaps it is time for a change of name.

As I have noted elsewhere, we may be united but we are definitely not uniform ([United But Not Uniform](#)). In fact, the differences between the 10% of the largest urban churches, the 50% of rural multi-point Pastoral Charges, and the 40% of remaining single-point Pastoral Charges is so great that I wonder if we shouldn't call ourselves the Church of the Holy Trinity.

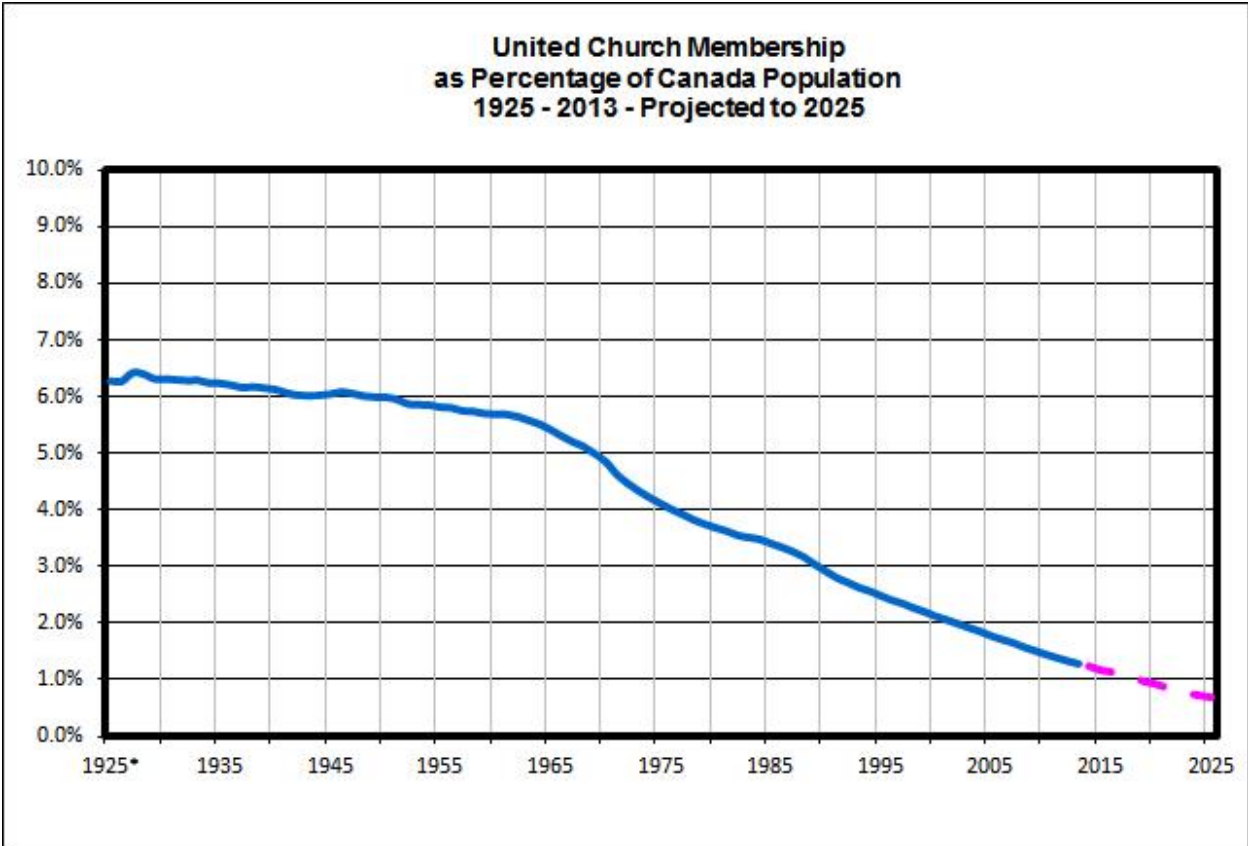
United Church Membership as a Percentage of Canada's Population

As of December 31, 2013, the total Membership as a percentage of Canada's population was 1.3%.

If the trend for the past 10 years continues unchanged, this percentage in 2025 will be 0.7%.

Note that as a percentage of Canada's population, United Church Membership declined during the "boom" era of 1945 (6.0%) to 1965 (5.4%) – a decline of 10% of Canadian participation in the United Church of Canada.

If the trend becomes reality, in 2025 Canadian participation in the UCC will have declined by 90% from that of 1945.

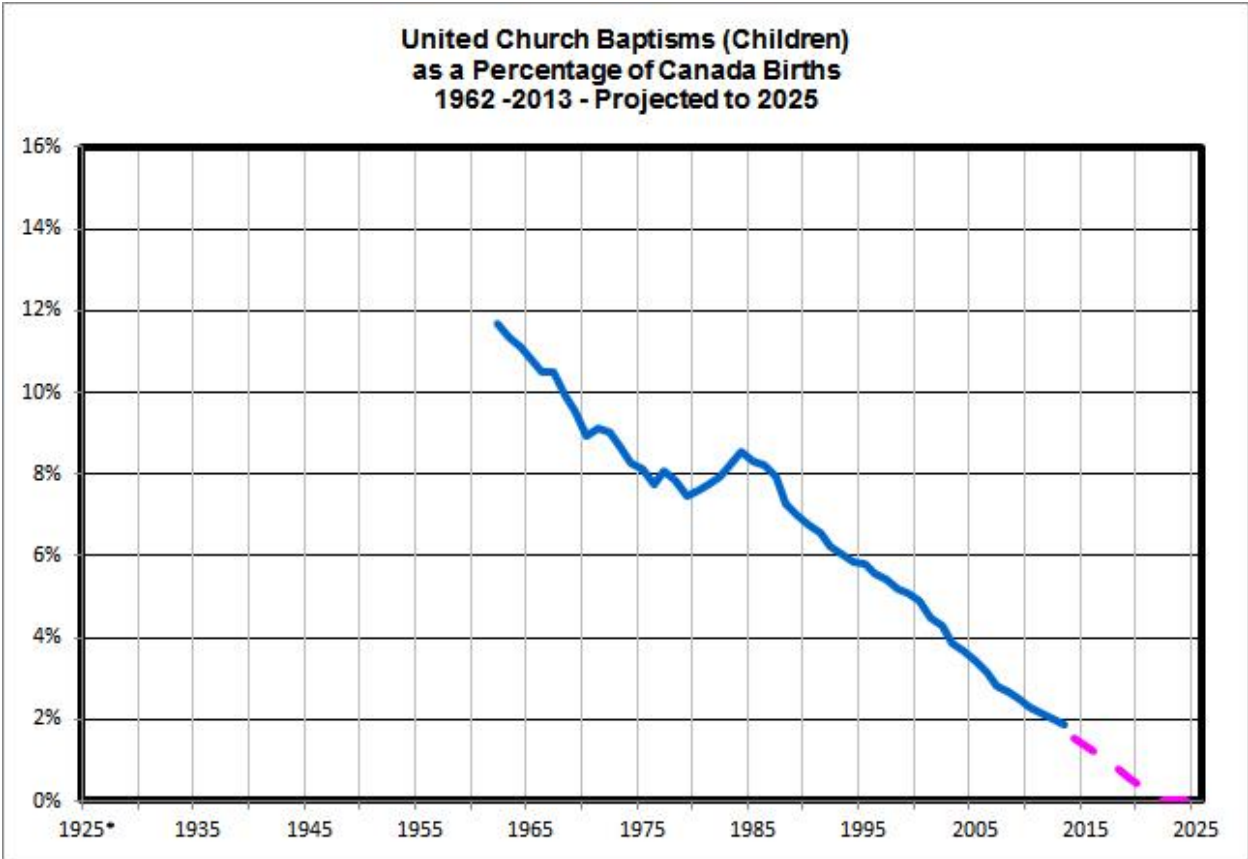


United Church Baptisms (Children) as a Percentage of Canada's Births

As of December 31, 2013, the Baptisms of Children as a percentage of Canada's births was 2.0%

If the trend for the past 10 years continues unchanged, this percentage will be zero in 2022 as the trend of Baptisms is to reach zero by that year.

Notes: So far, I have only been able to record the data for Baptisms of Children beginning in 1962. The rise in the rate of baptisms from 1980 – 1990 corresponds to a rise in other people data as some of the Baby Boom generation returned with their children.

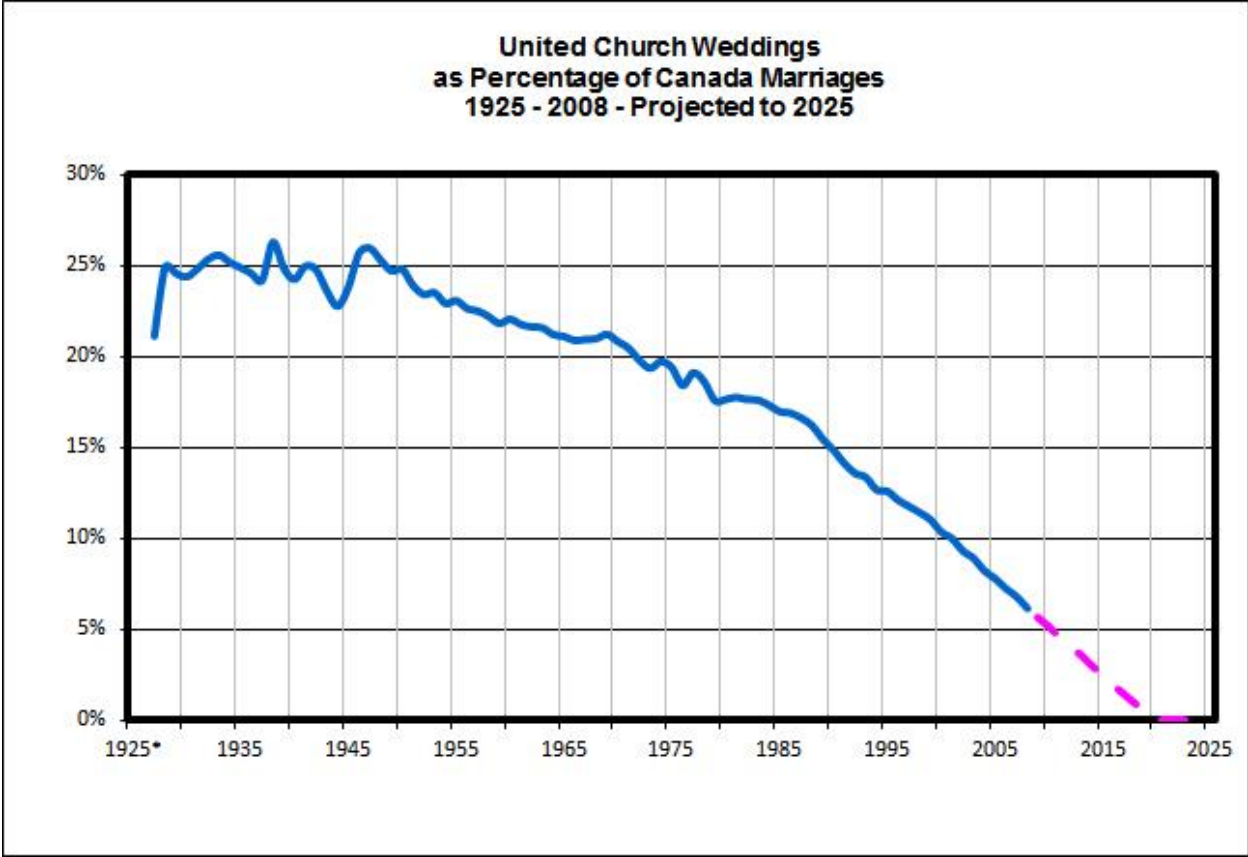


United Church Weddings as a Percentage of Canada's Marriages

As of December 31, 2008, the total United Church weddings performed as a percentage of Canada's marriages was 6.2%. Note that the Harper federal government stopped collating national data related to marriages in 2008, and so it is not possible to update this data to 2013.

If the trend for the 10 years up to 2008 continues unchanged, this percentage will be zero in 2020 as the trend of Weddings is to reach zero by that year.

Note: After rising to over 25% in the 2 years immediately following WW II, the participation rate has shown a steady decline.



United Church Funerals as a Percentage of Canada's Deaths

As of December 31, 2013, the total United Church funerals performed as a percentage of Canada's deaths was 6.7%

If the trend for the past 10 years continues unchanged, this percentage will be 1.2% in 2025.

Note: The decline in the percentage of Canadians having funerals conducted by the United Church of Canada began in 1970, and has been in steady decline since 1986.

