

United Church of Canada People Trends

As of 2007

Using Data from the 2008 Year Book

Prepared by David Ewart, www.davidewart.ca, February, 2009¹.

Membership (Line 16)

1965 was the peak of Membership in the United Church of Canada.

From 1945 to 1965, our Membership increased by 42% from 750,000 to 1,064,000.

If we had been able to maintain the 1945-1965 rate² of growth from 1966 to 2007, our Membership would have been 1,825,000 by 2007. Our reported Membership for 2007 was 545,000 a decline of 50% from 1965.

Compared to where we thought we'd be in the 1960's, we are missing 1,300,000 members. Or, to put it another way, our congregations should have 3 times more members and attendance than we currently have.

However, when considered as a percentage of the total Canadian population, our Membership actually declined from 1949³ to 1965, from 6.0% to 5.4%. Thus, even during our post-war "boom," we were not keeping pace with the overall population increase and were already declining as a church.

Future Trends: If our membership follows the same trend as it has for the past 10 years, then by the years 2010, 2015, 2020, and 2025 our Membership will be: 498,000, 421,000, 343,000 and 266,000 respectively – a further loss of 279,000 members, or 50%. **See Chart 1.**

In 2007, our Membership is 1.6% of the Canadian population. If the trend for the past 10 years continues unchanged, then by the years 2010, 2015, 2020, and 2025 our Membership will be: 1.4%, 1.1%, 0.8%, and 0.4% respectively. **See Chart 2.**

Congregations (Preaching Places) (Line 1)

From 1945 to 2007, the number of Congregations has declined from 6,780 to 3,360 – a loss of 3,420 Congregations, or 50%.

Future Trends: If the trend for the past 10 years continues unchanged, then by the years 2010, 2015, 2020, and 2025 the number of Congregations will be: 3,225, 2,980, 2,735, and 2,490 respectively – an additional loss of 930 Congregations, or 27%. **See Chart 3.**

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² Statements in this document about possible futures are based using a "least squares" statistical calculation using data for all the years reported, and not just comparing the two end points. For ease of reading, all data have been rounded.

³ Canadian population data did not include Newfoundland prior to 1949, whereas UCCan Membership did. So comparisons between the two are made from 1949 and not 1945 as with other data.

Total Church School Membership (Line 21)

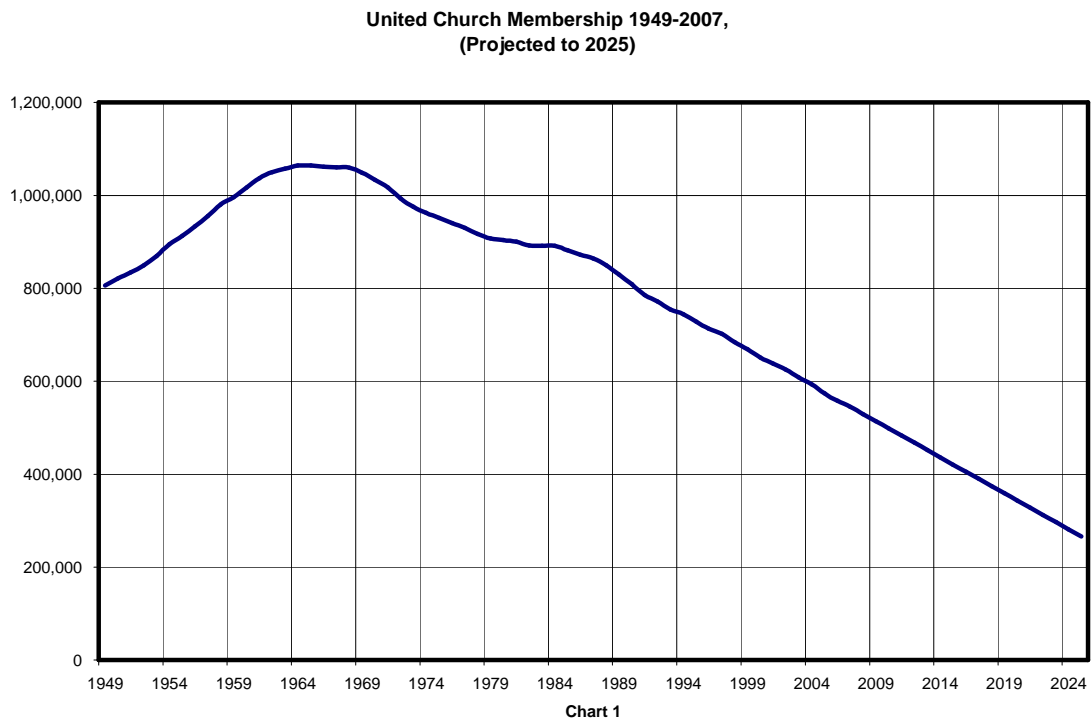
From 1961, when it was at its peak, to 2007, the Total Church School Membership (Officers, Teachers, Scholars) has declined from 757,000 to 80,700 – a loss of 676,300 Church School Members, or 90%.

Future Trends: If the trend for the past 10 years continues unchanged, then by the years 2010, 2015, and 2018 the Total Church School Membership will be: 55,800, 16,900, and 0 respectively – a total loss of our Church Schools in less than 10 years time. **See Chart 4.**

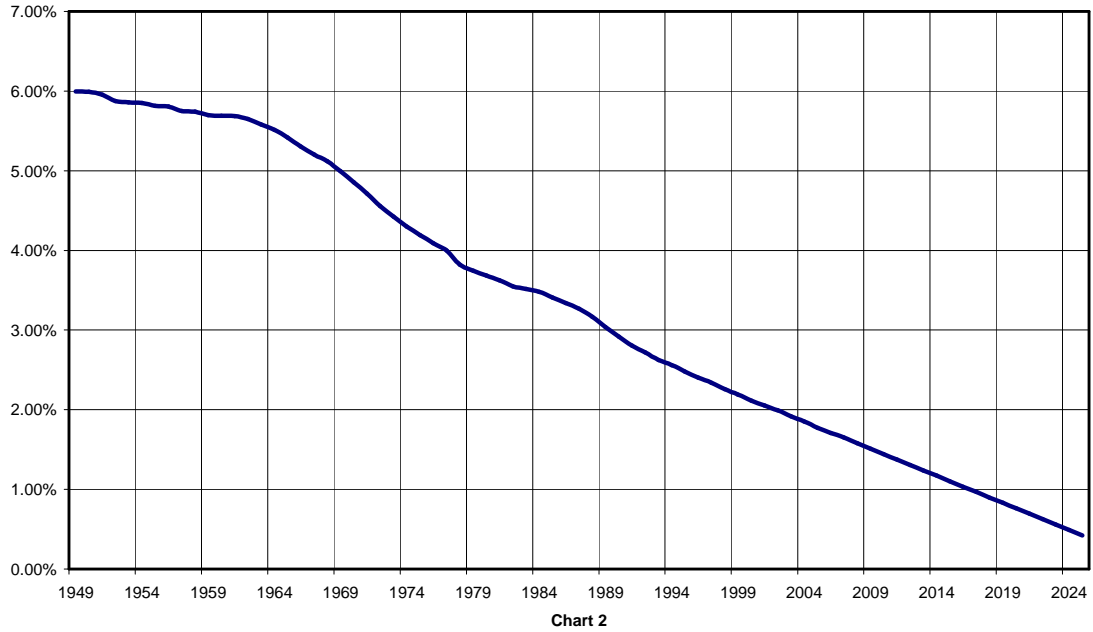
Average Weekly Attendance (Line 20)

Data for Average Weekly Attendance at Sunday Services of Worship was first gathered in 1977. From 1984, when it was at its peak, to 2007, the Average Attendance has declined from 403,700 to 204,400 – a loss of 199,300 worshippers, or 50%.

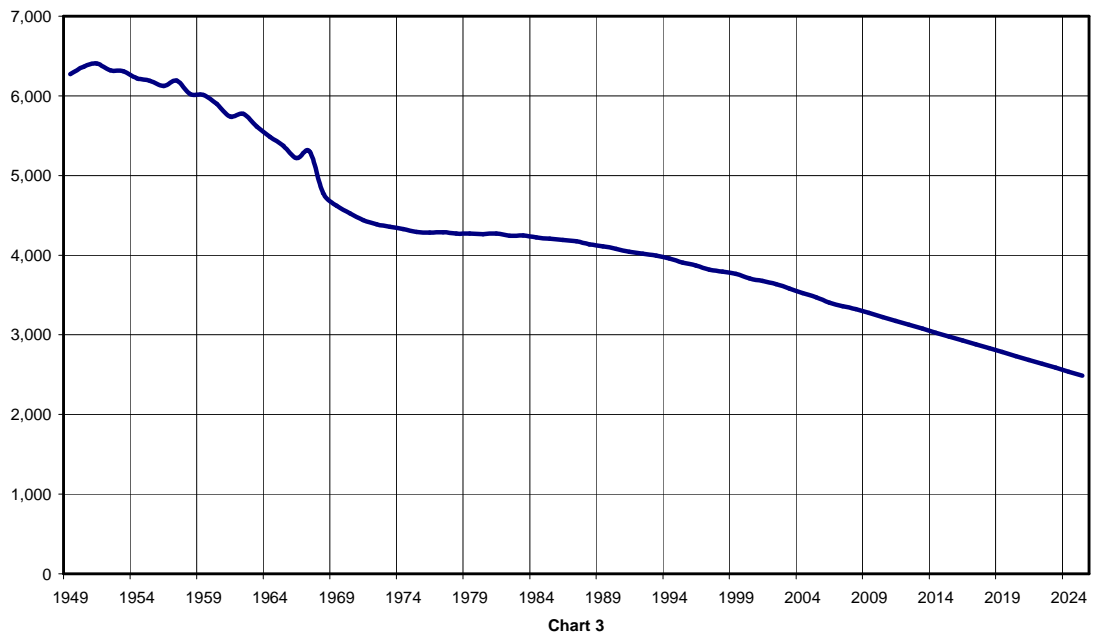
Future Trends: If the trend for the past 10 years continues unchanged, then by the years 2010, 2015, 2020, and 2025 the Average Weekly Attendance will be: 179,700, 134,300, 88,900, and 43,600 respectively – an additional loss of 160,800 worshippers, or 80%. **See Chart 5.**



United Membership as Percentage of Canadian Population, 1949-2007
(Projected to 2025)



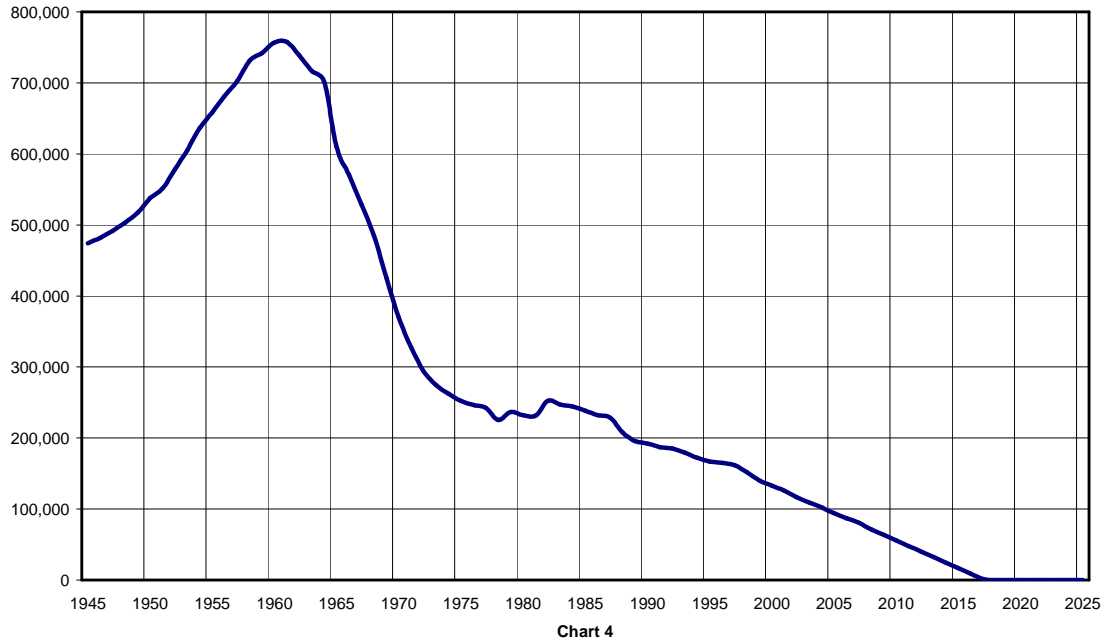
United Church Preaching Places, 1949-2007
(Projected to 2025)



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United Church Sunday School Membership, 1945-2007
(Projected to 2025)



United Church Average Weekly Attendance, 1977 - 2007
(Projected to 2025)

