

Press Release: XXV Sobor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

Gathering in Unity and Conciliarity, with a Determination to Strengthen Christ's Church in Complex Times

For Immediate Release

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada Holds XXV Sobor: Faith, Identity, and Service

July 19, 2025 – The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (UOCC) announces the successful convening of its XXV Sobor, marking 35 years as a Metropolis of the Mother Church – the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, and more than 100 years of spreading the Gospel of Christ and the Orthodox Christian faith throughout Canada, shaping the spiritual, cultural, and social landscape of the membership of the UOCC in these lands. This significant gathering, hosted in the city of Winnipeg, Manitoba, drew 147 UOCC clergy and laity from British Columbia to Quebec, all united in a spirit of prayer, reflection, and renewal. The XXV Sobor was honoured with the participation of three representatives of the Ecumenical Patriarchate: His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios of Canada, Patriarchal Exarch, His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia, and the Very Reverend Grand Archimandrite Iakovos (Krochak).

What is the Sobor?

The Sobor, derived from the Ukrainian word for "council" or "assembly," is the highest deliberative and legislative body of the UOCC. Held every five years, the Sobor brings together clergy, laity and youth representatives of parishes to discuss critical issues, set the Church's direction for the next five-year term, elect a new Consistory Board, and chart its mission in an evolving Canadian mosaic. The Sobor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada not only marks a continuity but also an opportunity for the Church to reaffirm its commitment to the Orthodox faith, our heritage, and community in the 21st century.

UOCC National Clergy Conference

Wednesday, 09 July, began with a Moleben of Thanksgiving, in the presence of the delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate and presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion, Primate of the UOCC, concelebrated by the Very Rev. Fr. Charles Baxter, Chancellor of the UOCC, and the Rt. Rev. Fr. Dr. Roman Bozyk, Dean of the Faculty of Theology, St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg. Following the Moleben, His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion presided over the UOCC National Clergy Conference, which heard presentations delivered by the Rt. Rev. Fr. Dr. Roman Bozyk, and the Very

Rev. Fr. Dr. Timothy Chrapko, professor of Dogmatics at St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg. Fr. Roman presented a historical synopsis of challenges to the hierarchy and leadership of the UOCC. Fr. Timothy spoke about the Sobor as a liturgical act. Clergy present had opportunity to ask questions and present their opinions on topics of pastoral service and the issues of concern at the XXV Sobor. The conference culminated with the much-anticipated presentation of the first volume of the new Служебник/Liturgicon (clergy service book), distributed to each priest and deacon present. The evening featured a welcome social hour for clergy and laity delegates.

Opening Divine Liturgy and Plenary Sessions

The XXV Sobor began on Thursday, 10 July, with Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in the Sobor Chapel at the Delta Hotel - Winnipeg, presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion, Primate of the UOCC, concelebrated by His Grace Bishop Andriy of Toronto and the Eastern Eparchy, and clergy of the outgoing Consistory Board, in the presence of the delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The first plenary session followed Divine Liturgy, opening with the procession into the session hall of the Icon of the Theotokos – “Mother of God of Canada”.

The session on Thursday included:

- Address of His All-Holiness Archbishop of Constantinople and New Rome, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I
- Address of His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion, Archbishop of Winnipeg and the Central Eparchy, Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada
- Greetings from the representatives of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Archbishop Soterios, Exarch of Canada, Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia and Grand Archimandrite Iakovos (Krochak)
- Greetings from His Grace Bishop Andriy of Toronto and the Eastern Eparchy
- Election of the Sobor presidium, scrutineers, committees and approval of procedures, and approval of the minutes of the XXIV Sobor
- Administrative report from the Chancellor and financial reporting from the Consistory Treasurer and the Internal Audit committee

The first day of plenary sessions concluded with nominations for the new Chair of the Presidium/Chancellor and members to the Consistory Board, the Ecclesiastical Tribunal, Audit Committee, and St. Andrew's College Board of Directors.

Friday Divine Liturgy and Plenary Sessions

Following Divine Liturgy, Friday's sessions included:

- Report from St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg
- Presentation of resolutions for consideration by the XXV Sobor
- The Annual General Meeting of the UOCC Foundation
- The first-round elections to the Consistory Board, the Ecclesiastical Tribunal, Audit Committee, and St. Andrew's College Board of Directors

Friday evening concluded with the St. Andrew's College Convocation and a wine-and-cheese reception.

Saturday Divine Liturgy and Plenary Sessions

Following Divine Liturgy, Saturday's sessions included:

- Discussion and voting on resolutions
- Closing address from His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion and the procession with the Icon of the Theotokos – "Mother of God of Canada" out of the Sobor sessions hall

Saturday evening concluded with the Great Vespers and the Sobor closing banquet.

Sunday Divine Liturgy

The XXV Sobor closed with Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in Holy Trinity Metropolitan Cathedral, celebrated by His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion, Primate of the UOCC, concelebrated by His Grace Bishop Andriy of Toronto and the Eastern Eparchy, clergy of the newly-elected Consistory Board, and the most senior clergy of the UOCC, with the participation of the delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Resolutions and the Path Forward

Throughout the Sobor, delegates deliberated on resolutions addressing:

- The adherence to the established canonical order of the Holy Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The adopted resolutions will guide the UOCC's priorities in the coming years, ensuring that the Church remains faithful to its ecclesiology, canonical order, and Church Tradition led by the Primate of the UOCC, and its spiritual mission while adapting to the changing needs of its members and the broader Canadian society.

Media Contact

For further information, interviews, or press materials, please contact:

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

Email: chancellor@uocc.ca

Phone: (204) 586-3093

Website: www.uocc.ca

End of Press Release