# Mission and Service Stories: May 2025

Mission and Service—helping transform lives, inspire meaning and purpose, and   
build a better world.



The United Church of Canada/L’Église Unie du Canada

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## Welcome to *Mission and Service Stories*!

*Mission and Service Stories* are for sharing with our faithful supporters to show them the amazing work their gifts make possible.

These stories can be used in services, in newsletters, and in face-to-face conversations. The more they’re shared, the more people will understand just how life-changing Mission and Service is!

For videos of some of the work you make possible, visit the [Mission and Service playlist](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQDu-SgFb3RgRuLXGcT2-DvK8VeECsVdv) on our YouTube channel.

We hope this resource is helpful and inspiring.

As always, we would **love to hear your feedback**. Drop us a line at [ms@united-church.ca](mailto:ms@united-church.ca) and let us know what you like, what we can improve on, and what we can focus on developing.

Blessings,

The Philanthropy Team

## May 4: Faith in Every Word: The Mohawk Bible Translation

Language carries the unique way a community understands the world. It shapes how people relate to one another, to the land, to the spiritual, and to the sacred. When a language is lost, a way of seeing the world is lost with it.

Preserving language enables future generations to engage in their rich culture in a rounded and essential way. Without understanding dialect-specific phrases and expressions, the vital wisdom of a culture can be lost.

As part of the ongoing work of preserving the Mohawk language, a complete translation of the Bible into the Mohawk language was developed, through the devotion, knowledge, and artistry of Harvey Satewas Gabriel and supported by generations of women in the Gabriel family and the communities of Kanesatake and Kahnawake.

Those partnering on the Mohawk Language Bible have taken great care and effort in ensuring proper language interpretation and translation. Working in agreement with the Mohawk Nation, collaborators have taken the time to listen to each other and learn in order to move the project forward.

Your gifts to [Mission and Service](https://united-church.ca/donate) allow projects that preserve language and culture to flourish. Thank you for helping to uplift voices, preserve heritage, and walk in respectful relationship.

[*Ohiatonhseratokénti: The Holy Bible in Mohawk*](https://ucrdstore.ca/products/ohiatonhseratokenti-the-holy-bible-in-mohawk?_pos=1&_sid=c5d9cf447&_ss=r) *is available for purchase through the UCRD bookstore.*

## May 11: Learning About God’s Love

Queer Kid Bible Camp is a unique and affirming space that has emerged to provide a supportive environment for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth within the framework of spirituality. Started by Mission and Service partner Silver Spire United Church in St. Catharines, Ontario, Queer Kid Bible Camp blends teachings of God’s love with messages of inclusivity.

Queer individuals have often been marginalized or excluded in spiritual experiences, which can make them feel isolated and alienated. Queer Kid Bible Camp aims to challenge these negative experiences by fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance in a spiritual context. The camp offers a place for young 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals to explore and reconcile their faith with their identity. Through theological and spiritual discussions, youth can openly ask questions without feeling uncertain about their safety.

The benefits of Queer Kid Bible Camp extend beyond its immediate impact on individual campers. The camp experience sparks conversation with parents and guardians who want to connect and understand their children better. As young participants gain confidence and self-acceptance, they become advocates for change within their own communities. The Rev. Karen Orlandi of Silver Spire United Church has seen a wonderful ripple effect, noting that she’s seen “healing for queer adults as they see queer kids openly embracing their identity.”

Your support through [Mission and Service](https://united-church.ca/mission-and-service-old) provides the queer community with opportunities to thrive in safe environments as they learn about God’s love. Thank you.

## May 18: Rooted in History, Reaching for Tomorrow

As The United Church of Canada approaches its 100th anniversary, we give thanks for a century of faithful witness, compassion, and commitment to justice. While the formal “Mission and Service” hasn’t been with us from the very beginning, the heart of it – the compassion to care for others, to build peace, to support communities – has always been part of who we are.

For decades, through changing times and shifting needs, Mission and Service has connected us to one another across the miles and has strengthened our call to live out God’s love in tangible, meaningful ways.

Today, gifts to Mission and Service support a wide range of programs: from food security and emergency response, to education and global partnerships, to right relations and anti-racism work. Every gift matters. Every act of generosity plants seeds of love and hope.

As we look to the future, we know that the work is far from over. But we also know that, together, we can do more than we ever could alone. With your support, Mission and Service will continue to grow, nurturing life, justice, and compassion for generations to come.

Thank you for the way you continue to compassionately step forward through [Mission and Service](https://united-church.ca/donate).

## May 25: A Story of Cultural Resilience

Storytelling has always been a powerful way to preserve history, share experiences, and shape understanding. The theatre production *Bunk #7* did just that, leaving significant impact on both the cast and the audiences who witnessed its profound narrative.

*Bunk #7* tells the true story of six boys who, in the early 1960s, stood up against the systemic mistreatment and abuse they endured at Edmonton Indian Residential School in St. Albert, Alberta. Written by the late Nisga’a MLA Larry Guno, the play drew from his own experience as a student at the residential school. *Bunk #7* was named after Guno’s bunk number—a personal touch that connected the story to the heart of the playwright’s lived truth.

The play was brought to life by an exceptional cast of Indigenous youth and young adults, creating a space for both performers and audiences to learn, reflect, and share the story of cultural resilience. The production premiered at Raven Theatre in British Columbia in November 2021, where it was met with overwhelming support. This response led to a transformative tour throughout northwestern BC in the fall of 2023. Each performance continued to resonate deeply with audiences, showing the lasting impact of this remarkable piece of theatre.

*Bunk #7* continues to echo through the hearts of those who experienced it. The powerful message of survival, resilience, and resistance against injustice lives on, sparking important conversations and encouraging deeper understanding of the Indigenous experience.

Your gifts to [Mission and Service](https://united-church.ca/donate) helped create opportunities for stories like *Bunk #7* to be shared, heard, and honored in a way that fosters healing and transformation. Thank you for your continued support in keeping these important stories alive.

*A* [*behind-the-scenes film*](https://www.bunk7.ca/the-film)*, directed by Haida filmmaker Patrick Shannon of InnoNative, shares more about the people involved in bringing this powerful play to life.*