



**STORIES OF THE
MISSION AND
SERVICE FUND**

AT WORK IN

**TORONTO
CONFERENCE
2009**



Dear friends in Toronto Conference:

This year we are again glad to provide you with the “2009 Stories of the Mission and Service at Work in Toronto Conference”. These stories are written to show to you just some of the ways that through your gifts to the Mission and Service Fund, these social justice initiatives, outreach ministries, chaplaincies, church development and redevelopment projects and first nations ministries have become your ministries. The stories are provided in order that you and your congregations might become better aware of the wonderful good work that our Church does throughout our Conference. We hear talk that the United Church is not the great institution that it once was- that we are dying. This booklet proves that it is not the case. We are making a difference in our communities. We have much to offer.

Once again we thank George James who skillfully brought these stories alive. It is no easy task to write these stories and George has now done this for several years. Use these stories at a meeting, in worship or for your own personal devotions.

Changes are happening rapidly in our Conference. In the midst of our restructuring, there are many questions left about how we will carry out the work of the church. Your continued gifts to Mission and Service, will ensure that these projects will continue to bless the lives of many in our Conference. It is a visible sign of our faith lived out.

Blessings,

Darren Liepold,
Conference Minister for Mission and Service Fund Support

Chaplaincies:

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
New Friends of Dismas
Grey Bruce Health Services
Mount Sinai
Muskoka Chaplaincy Association
North York General Hospital
Toronto Christian Resource Centre
Toronto East General Hospital
University of Toronto - Ecumenical Chaplaincy
York University Student Christian Movement
Chaplaincy Coordinator

Native Ministries

Christian Island United Church
Georgina Island United Church
Toronto Urban Native ministry

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1. GEORGINA ISLAND UNITED CHURCH

When your home is on an island, access can be an important issue, especially during the in-between seasons when boats can't navigate and the ice is not yet thick enough for safe travel. Georgina Island, located in Lake Simcoe, is home to a Chippewa native community, and when the band's minister had to take a leave of absence due to illness, finding pulpit supply proved to be difficult. The nearby mainland churches of Sutton and Virginia extended a warm welcome, but attendance requires a fairly lengthy Sunday morning journey.

The United Church congregation on Georgina Island is small in numbers, but its reach extends much beyond the actual membership. In reality, the United Church provides pastoral care and support to the whole community. A sign of this is the location of the church office -in the island community centre, where it is visible and accessible to all.

This past fall, the native community was very happy to have a visit from the United Church Moderator, the Rev. David Giuliano. The congregation made it a celebrative event, inviting six other native communities to join with them for the occasion. The church sees itself as helping to bridge the separation that has resulted from the injustices of the Residential School system.

Maintaining the church's presence on the island is never easy. Some extensive repairs are needed to put the aging church building in proper shape, and finances are limited. The Band Administration has been very supportive, but without a grant from the Mission and Service Fund the future of the ministry would be in doubt. When you contribute to M and S you are taking part in the ministry that means so much to this dedicated congregation, and others like it.

Through your gifts to M&S, you supported the following ministries in Toronto Conference this year:

Pastoral Charge Support

Holly United Church
New Hope United Church
North Star United Church
Pathways United Church Mission
Painswick United Church Mission
Queensville United Church
Regent Park United Church
Wasaga Beach United Church
Wyevale-Waverly United Church

Outreach Ministries and Social Issues Projects

The Anglican United Refugee Alliance AURA
Davenport Perth Community ministry
Fred Victor Centre
Jane Finch Ministry
Malvern Community ministry
Massey Centre for Women
Queen s Bush Rural Ministry
St. Matthew s Bracondale House
Toronto Christian Resource Centre
Toronto Urban Native ministry

21. WYEVALE-WAVERLEY UNITED CHURCH

Wyevale and Waverley United Churches in Simcoe Presbytery are facing a problem common to many rural churches: declining numbers, and congregations that consist largely of seniors on fixed incomes. Meeting the operating budget has become increasingly difficult over the last few years. In 2006 the pastoral charge asked for a Mission Support grant for the first time in its history, and has had to renew the request in each of the following years.

The pastoral charge is served by the Rev. Peter Kugba-Nyende, who was head of the Methodist Church in Sierra Leone, West Africa. He was forced to flee his homeland during that country's civil war that lasted from 1991 till 2002. Later, through help from the Methodist Church and his own hard work, Peter was able to bring his wife and four children. They are grateful every day just to be alive and safe, and they have been very warmly received into the Wyevale and Waverley communities. Peter hopes eventually to return to Sierra Leone and help with that country's reconstruction. Already he has been instrumental in building a primary school in his home village, and the Wyevale/Waverley communities -not just the United Church members have generously supported him.

Having Peter in their midst has been a wonderful learning experience for the two congregations of this rural charge. They are most anxious to support him for as long as he is able to stay with them. However, in spite of major fund-raising events which have also engaged the community beyond the church, the pastoral charge won't be able to meet its commitments without additional help. Thus, the request for a Mission Support grant for 2009.

Your offerings each week to the Mission and Service Fund bring urgently needed help to congregations across Toronto Conference and beyond. Please give as generously as you are able.

2. QUEEN'S BUSH RURAL MINISTRIES

When farmers in Bruce and Grey Counties experience a crisis, whether it be financial, domestic or personal, there is an agency to which they can turn for support, expert advice and referral. It is known as the Queen's Bush Rural Ministries, in operation since 1987. At that time, many farmers were facing the loss of their farms and their way of life because of a credit crunch and threats of foreclosures. Many were in desperate straits. Bruce Presbytery responded by establishing the Queen's Bush Rural Ministry, and Grey Presbytery joined a short time later.

Unfortunately, the need for such a service turned out to be long-term, rather than short. Farming today is still fraught with challenges that can lead to financial difficulties, putting stress on emotional and family well-being. The Ministry offers support and technical expertise, in some cases simply offering a much-needed understanding ear; in others referring the client to competent professionals to assess and assist their needs.

A 1-800 phone number provides easy access, and trained staff provide a confidential service to seekers, not just in Bruce and Grey Counties, but occasionally in Perth, Wellington and Huron Counties as well. There is one paid staff member, and a volunteer board of directors made up of representatives from a variety of denominations.

Over the years this ministry has proved invaluable to many in the farming community. It is made possible in part by a grant from Mission Support funds. Your weekly offering to the Mission and Service Fund makes a difference to countless people, not just in the farm community but in situations of need across Toronto Conference and beyond. Thank you for giving as generously as you are able.

3. JANE FINCH COMMUNITY MINISTRY

In the area of northwest Toronto known as the Jane Finch neighbourhood, there are over 72 different languages and dialects spoken, and representation from more than 115 different countries. It is little wonder the UN named Toronto as the world's most cosmopolitan city!

As well as being culturally diverse, however, Jane Finch is also a low-income community with a high rate of public housing developments. Youth unemployment is a serious problem. Violence is no stranger to these streets.

The Jane Finch Community Ministry was begun by Toronto West Presbytery more than 25 years ago, to be a healing presence in this often-hurting community. The Ministry is located in Firgrove, a public housing community of 382 households; however, the ministry's reach is much wider, seeking to serve the larger area of Jane and Finch. Working in close partnership with other agencies, this outreach of the United Church provides an astonishing array of services, including: recreation programs for youth, community and cultural festivals, educational upgrading and employment programs, income tax clinics, a monthly food bank, community kitchens, and student nutrition programs, to name only a few. This fall, the Ministry worked with other groups to provide 700 backpacks filled with school supplies, and three \$1000 scholarships.

For people living in an area where social services and supports are never enough to meet the need, the Jane Finch Community Ministry helps to fill the void. As United Church people, we have a part to play in this vital ministry through our support of the Mission and Service Fund. Please give as generously as you are able.

20. WASAGA BEACH UNITED CHURCH

When a group of people in the town of Wasaga Beach decided it was time there was a United Church presence in the community, they began by meeting in homes, holding open air services, worshipping in a tent or wherever space was available. That was ten years ago. Eventually, a private school in the area came up for sale, and was purchased by the Toronto United Church Council. Wasaga Beach United Church renovated the space, mostly with volunteer labour, and rented it from the Council.

That worked well for a while, but with the growth of Wasaga Beach the church's membership also grew. The space proved to be too limiting. Enlarging it was out of the question, since the property was rented. So in 2007 the congregation took a great leap of faith and purchased the building and land. They entered into a capital campaign and are now receiving pledges that will be paid in full by 2010.

A lot of hard work and sacrificial giving is being asked of this congregation, and the members are responding with commitment and enthusiasm. They are excited about the prospect of eventually being able to build the sanctuary they need. Their hope is that in 5 years they will be a fully self-supporting congregation. Meanwhile, they still need the help of the wider United Church to maintain their week by week ministry. The contributions you make to the Mission and Service Fund help churches like Wasaga Beach to establish their place in the community. Please remember to include the M and S Fund in your weekly offering.

19. TORONTO NATIVE URBAN MINISTRY

The Toronto Native Urban Ministry offers an invaluable service to the roughly 60,000 Native persons who call Toronto their home. Life in the city can be exceedingly difficult for people who have been isolated from their cultural roots, who often have great difficulty finding employment, and who are often the recipients of prejudice or rejection.

The Ministry works specifically with street people, people in residential school healing programs, and rehabilitation programs for those coming out of prison. In addition to the pastoral care that this requires, two worship services are held weekly. One is on Friday evenings at Metropolitan United Church, and the other on Sundays at Council Fire, an aboriginal social services agency where the ministry offices are located.

Exciting developments are taking place in the neighbourhood with the redevelopment of Regent Park and the First Nations Public School. The Urban Native Ministry is developing an aboriginal congregation, and is exploring ways to help other congregations be more welcoming of people interested in aboriginal spirituality.

A United Church minister and an Anglican minister presently provide the pastoral support for the Toronto Urban Native Ministry. The salary of the United Church minister is the responsibility of the United Church, and a grant from the Mission and Service Fund is needed to assure the continuation of this essential work. Your offering for the M and S Fund makes it all possible. Thank you for your faithful giving.

4. THE ANGLICAN UNITED REFUGEE ALLIANCE

In a perfect world, no one would be living in a refugee camp. But the harsh reality is that the number of refugees worldwide is growing rather than diminishing. Conflicts and natural disasters are forcing more and more people from their homes, their livelihoods and all semblance of normal living.

In the face of this dire situation, many churches have responded generously by undertaking to sponsor individual refugees or entire families. Many other congregations have considered the idea, but have not acted on it. In many cases, their hesitation is because the process for sponsorship can seem to be a daunting one. How does one even begin to go about it?

There's an organization within Toronto Conference that is ready to help answer such questions and lead congregations through the sponsorship maze. It's called the Anglican United Refugee Alliance, supported by both the Anglican and United Churches. As well as helping congregations, the Alliance works to raise awareness of refugee and migration issues in the wider community. Their Sponsorship Information Sessions are very well attended.

Such activities are not revenue producing, and it's largely through a Mission Support grant that the United Church is able to take part in this vital ministry. Toronto Conference receives more refugees than any other Conference in the United Church, so the need is great. When you give generously to the Mission and Service Fund, you play a part in giving hope and new life to a refugee family who might otherwise never leave a camp.

5. ST. MATTHEW'S BRACONDALE HOUSE

S1. Matthew's Bracondale House on St. Clair Avenue West in Toronto provides a service that is desperately needed in the community. It offers bright, attractive housing for low income seniors 65 years and over, and also for young families. The seniors' building contains 98 one-bedroom suites and 30 bachelor apartments. The family building, which is separate, contains 18 two and three-bedroom units.

At present, 141 senior tenants live at Bracondale. The majority of these are women living alone, and almost half of them are over the age of 80. More than half the senior tenants receive a rent subsidy.

Bracondale House provides a wide range of services that are used not just by the residents but by the surrounding community as well. Many of these services are geared to making it possible for seniors to remain independent and live on their own. Personal care and homemaking services are provided to an average of 55 seniors each week.

One of the evident needs for seniors living alone is good nutritional meals, and Bracondale House has developed several programs to meet this need. Hot meals are made available both at noon and in the evening. Some women take the meals in their own room, but many use the meals as a time of fellowship and socializing. Maintaining good nutrition has many benefits, including delaying the onset of some disabilities, and even slowing the progression of disease.

A grant from Mission Support helps to fund the Seniors Eating Well program. It is your generous support of the Mission and Service Fund that makes this grant possible. Thank you for remembering M and S in your weekly offering.

18. TORONTO CHRISTIAN RESOURCE CENTRE

The Toronto Christian Resource Centre was founded in 1964 to work with the marginalized members of society, the homeless and the no-to-low income people in the downtown core of Toronto.

Since that time, of course, great changes have taken place in the inner city, and with it the work of the Resource Centre. With the ongoing redevelopment of Regent Park, new demands are still being made on the Centre's staff as they work with people going through the trauma of relocation.

Homelessness is another of the big issues in the downtown core, and working with the homeless requires sensitivity and expertise. When a homeless person comes to the Centre, the staff recognizes that the person will likely have other issues besides not having a place to live. Often there is no identification, no income, and no hope. The staff works with each person to secure identification and ensure that they have income through Ontario Works, or the Ontario Disability Support Program other needs are addressed, such as health and dental care, psychiatric care, addictions counseling and life skills coaching. The staff then work with the homeless person to find housing, view the apartment, meet the landlord and sign a rental agreement. Ongoing visits are made to ensure that the person remains housed and is coping with their new situation.

The Christian Resource Centre also provides support to grass roots groups in the community, such as "Dreamers", a group of mothers and grandmothers who have lost children to gun violence; and a "Gardening Group" consisting of 90 families who work together to grow their own vegetables and fruit.

Through the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church, we take our place as participants in this vital and compassionate ministry. Please give to M and S as generously as you are able.

17. REGENT PARK UNITED CHURCH

Regent Park United Church is the result of the joining of several congregations over a period of years. The present church building, at 40 Oak Street, was erected in 1954.

In its early days, many in Regent Park came from Irish, English and Scottish backgrounds. That began to change in the 1970s when large numbers from the Caribbean began to arrive. In the 1980s the East Asian population increased dramatically; and today large numbers of new Canadians from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Africa are moving into the area. This is a community that truly reflects the changing demographics of Canada.

Regent Park congregation is small, but it exercises a ministry that is much wider than the membership numbers would suggest. The redevelopment of Regent Park has had a traumatic effect on residents of the area. Large numbers have had to be relocated during the building of the new community, with all the anxiety that this produces. In 2008 the Community Chaplain worked with 393 dislocated families, many of whom will move back into the new Regent Park in 2009. The church seeks to be a calming presence and a place of hope in this time of massive transformation.

The church space is used not only by the United Church congregation, but by several other faith groups as well, including Tamil, Hispanic Catholic and Congolese Christian. The site will be redeveloped as part of Regent Park's transformation, and it is anticipated that the congregation will grow when the project is complete.

Regent Park United Church, by its very nature, must rely on assistance from beyond its own congregation. Your contributions to the Mission and Service Fund help to make this vital ministry possible. Thank you for remembering to include M and S in your weekly offering.

6. CHRISTIAN ISLAND UNITED CHURCH

Christian Island, located in the southern part of Georgian Bay, is home to about 650 native people during the winter months and considerably more in the summer. The people are Ojibway and Pottawatimi; some still speak the Ojibway language, though most are English speaking.

For many years the United Church has been an important presence on the island, providing worship services, pastoral care and counseling not just for those who claim United Church membership, but for all in the community who turn to the church for help. The needs are great. Unemployment runs to 87% and young families struggle to make ends meet on social assistance. This means an increase in family violence, depression and suicide. The church is looked up to as a place of safety and healing of broken spirits in the face of so many social problems. In many respects, the resident United Church minister acts as chaplain to the whole community.

The congregation works hard at keeping the church building in good repair. There is also a church hall used by the community for family gatherings, UCW projects, training courses and adult study groups.

St. Paul's United Church in Midland and the Christian Island Pastoral Charge are building strong relationships in an effort to reach out to Aboriginal people living off reserve on the mainland, and to encourage mutual understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Because of very limited resources, Christian Island United Church depends for its very existence on a Mission Support grant. Your offering Sunday by Sunday to the Mission and Service Fund makes this ministry possible. Thank you for giving.

7. DAVENPORT PERTH COMMUNITY MINISTRY

Davenport Perth Community Ministry, a project started by Toronto West Presbytery in 1988, serves a region of West Toronto that was once a major industrial area. Now it is home to two public housing communities. It is an area of great racial diversity, and the majority of people live with the pressures of high, or uncertain, unemployment, lack of access to post-secondary education, discrimination based on race, and a lack of safe and affordable housing.

Working in partnership with other community organizations, the Davenport Perth Community Ministry seeks to enhance the lives of area residents through projects and programs as diverse as literacy and math help for children and youth, and support groups for parents. Up to 40 children a week play literacy games, perform in readers' theatre, enjoy the stories of celebrity readers and use the JUMP math program to improve their math skills. In August, about 60 parents and children attended a Family Camp.

The Ministry makes a positive difference in the community by addressing the root causes of poverty and oppression, as well as engaging the wisdom and passion of the residents in coping with these realities. The programs this year have included a video-making and photography program for youth, with a public exhibition of their work; community voting education; workshops on raising sexually healthy children; a Backpack Drive and Labour Day picnic; and community music nights to beat the winter blues -to name just a few.

This vibrant ministry depends for its funding on a variety of sources, but a part of it must come from a Mission Support grant. That is where your contributions to the Mission and Service Fund come into play. As M and S contributors, you make a vital difference to the lives of many people. Thanks for your support.

16. QUEENSVILLE UNITED CHURCH

Queensville United Church, about 6 miles north of Newmarket, is located in the village of Queensville, in the Town of East Gwillimbury. The congregation was formed in 1884, and the present building dates from 1889. For 120 years, Queensville was part of a joint pastoral charge. However, with growth taking place in the neighbouring areas, Queensville was established a few years ago by York Presbytery as a single point charge.

The projection for Queensville Village is an eventual population of 30,000 people. That may be a little while in the future, but the present congregation is determined to be there for the needs of the larger community when that happens. In the meanwhile, maintaining the present aging building, and providing programs for adults, youth and children, is a very real challenge.

Members describe the church as alive and vibrant, and it has an impressive range of programs. Youth take part in the Sunday services on a regular basis. A very active women's group called Women of Worth provides, among many other things, a monthly lunch from September to June for about 150 people. This is just one of many fund-raisers the congregation undertakes in an effort to be self-sustaining.

In these early years as a single-point pastoral charge, Queensville United has been grateful for a grant from Mission Support funds to help make ends meet. The Mission and Service Fund serves as a lifeline for congregations across the United Church. Thank you for remembering the Mission and Service Fund in your weekly offerings.

15. PATHWAYS UNITED CHURCH MISSION

Pathways United Church Mission in Markham is a powerfully inspired community of liberal Christians who engage the wider community to live, learn, and celebrate the teaching of Jesus through a variety of sacred and contemporary sources. Pathways explores new and different ways to come together in Christian community and seeks to become a beacon for those searching for an inclusive, alternative faith journey.

More than three years ago, Pathways was launched with a special event featuring Bishop John Spong, which was instrumental in many current members coming to Pathways. The community continues to bring thought-provoking speakers, and to introduce talented musicians whose varied perspectives help individuals to explore their faith.

Pathways wants to share their gifts beyond the Markham/Unionville area, and has ambitious plans for doing this through use of the internet. Pathways has identified three areas of potential development:

1. A Youth Network web-site (YUnited) that has the potential to connect all UC youth through one easy portal. It will provide a forum for videos and photos, national dialogue, webcasting of national events, learning and leadership opportunities, and allow youth leaders to share resources and projects.
2. The sharing with other churches of resources from its sacred gatherings. Pathways hopes to both give and to receive new insights for their own community.
3. Live-streaming broadcasts to allow people anywhere to share their services, special guest speakers, and musicians either live or from archived recordings. This will be both revenue-producing and a means of attracting new members.

While participation in Pathways is growing and the need for this ministry is clearly evident, the congregation is still dependent on the parent church in these early years for financial help. Your givings to M & S make this exciting and innovative ministry possible.
Thank you for your support to its ongoing life.

8. FRED VICTOR CENTRE

The Fred Victor Centre in Toronto's Downtown is a case study in the evolution of social services. Founded in 1894 as the Fred Victor Mission of the Methodist Church at Queen and Jarvis, its mandate was to address the basic needs of homeless and transient men. Today, as the Fred Victor Centre, it offers a whole range of services, including low-cost housing, to both men and women. It takes an imaginative and caring approach to meeting the food, physical and mental health, housing, social contact, employment and training needs of people living in poverty.

The Fred Victor Centre's services are used mainly by adults with little or no income, the chronically homeless, often with significant physical and mental health issues, and sometimes facing cultural and language barriers.

Many people first find out what the Centre has to offer when they come for a meal at the Friends Restaurant at the Queen and Jarvis location. The restaurant opened in 1990 as one of the Centre's key community programs. Instead of using the soup kitchen model, the restaurant offers low-cost, nutritious meals. This is especially important since many of its customers routinely depend on food that has been donated to drop-ins - food that tends to be high in fat and sugar and low in fibre and nutrients. For those unable to pay, the restaurant offers a credit incentive system.

The restaurant also serves as a site for food services training, working in collaboration with George Brown College. A significant number of previously-unemployed people find work as graduates of this program.

Staff at Fred Victor Centre have wonderful success stories to tell, of people whose lives have been dramatically changed by the services and opportunities offered by this outreach ministry. Your givings to the Mission and Service Fund play an essential part in making it happen. Please give generously as you are able.

9. HOLLY UNITED CHURCH MISSION

Holly United Church Mission is one of the new church development congregations in the rapidly expanding city of Barrie. Just as the city is scrambling to keep up with its infrastructure needs, so the area churches are hard-put to provide the spiritual support the community requires. The last census indicates that United Church affiliation in the Barrie area is one of the highest in Canada, so United Church presence is especially important.

Holly United Church is located in the southwest corner of Barrie. The community is mixed: retirees from the Greater Toronto Area, and young families working in a number of different places. Many make the daily commute to the GTA, some work in the Honda plant in Alliston, others at Base Borden, Collingwood, Midland and in Barrie itself. Schools in the area are all growing rapidly.

Planting a new congregation is never easy. Holly United Church struggles with the problem of inadequate facilities, using shared space that limits the programs they can offer. However, they have a strong vision and a definite sense of purpose. They have identified as an urgent need a program for teens who are on drugs and/or alcohol, dropping out of school and in trouble with the law. In partnership with several other organizations they are launching a plan to provide classes in coping skills and youth counseling. Gradually, the church is gaining a higher profile in the community and membership is increasing.

For the foreseeable future, the congregation will need the financial and moral support of the wider church. The Mission and Service Fund helps to keep the dream alive. Thank you for your support of this vital work of our church.

14. PAINSWICK MISSION

Pull up the Painswick United Church website on your computer, and you can feel the excitement that's stirring in this new United Church development in southeast Barrie. The arrival of a new minister -Glenn Butler -in June, 2008, after a gap of six months, has given momentum to this young congregation.

Painswick United Church operates out of two sites. One is at The Terraces, a seniors' home where the congregation first began. The other is in Kingswood Plaza on the southern edge of Barrie. Average worship attendance at the Kingswood Plaza site has grown from an average of fifteen to fifty in just four months. The church has changed its name from the Painswick Mission to Painswick United Church; they have designed a beautiful new logo and developed a very attractive and informative website. In addition to the many young families who come out to worship, they welcome a number of Filipino migrant workers who enrich the congregation's diversity.

Painswick United is planning to enlarge the space they lease at Kingswood Plaza, in order to accommodate more children and youth programming. But their ultimate goal is to build a church on a site that was purchased a number of years ago by Toronto United Church Council.

At this point, the congregation still depends on support from the wider church, though they are working hard to become self-sustaining. Your contributions to the Mission and Service Fund help to make this growing and exciting ministry possible. Thank you for giving generously.

13. NORTH STAR UNITED CHURCH

"North Star United Church is the face of future Canada," says one member, reflecting on the ethnic diversity of this congregation. Located in Springdale in the northeast corner of Brampton, North Star began seven years ago and quickly welcomed new members from many of the Caribbean islands, and from a variety of countries. One of the often-lamented characteristics of the United Church is that it attracts mainly white Anglo-Saxon members, but North Star has succeeded in moving beyond that.

One member tells of a very moving service when the Pentecost story from the second chapter of Acts was read simultaneously by congregational members in their own tongue. The effect was electrifying. Music in the worship services reflects the traditions of a variety of cultures.

Like all new congregations that are struggling to establish themselves, North Star has had its ups and downs. It has not always been easy to find ministry personnel to staff the church. However, the congregation knows that a church like North Star has an important role to play in this culturally diverse region, and they are a determined lot.

At this stage, North Star United Church would be hard put to carry on without the support of the whole church. Through your givings to the Mission and Service Fund, you help to make this ministry possible. Thank you for taking your part in this important enterprise.

10. MALVERN COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

When the Malvern Community in the northeast part of Scarborough makes it into the evening news, it is usually because of some act of violence that has taken place. It is true that the area has more than its share of problems -clashes between gangs, youth alienation and unemployment, poverty, lack of adequate community resources. However, Rev. Sydney Elias, who staffs the Malvern Community Outreach Ministry, points out that that is not the whole picture. He says that what is not generally understood is that a lot of the violence is localized and that many of the communities within Malvern have been, and continue to be, safe places.

Nonetheless, there is a huge need for community supports of various kinds. The Malvern Community Outreach Ministry, a project started by Toronto Scarborough Presbytery, works in close cooperation with other agencies and churches in the area. Presently its main focus is on work with youth. It provides resources for youth to publish their own high-quality quarterly newspaper; it gives assistance to elementary and middle school children in an after-school program where homework can be done in a safe environment with adult help and supervision. It runs a parent support group to help parents cope with the day-to-day problems associated with raising and educating their children. This kind of help can make a great difference to family life right now, and create a climate of hope for the future.

Your givings to the Mission and Service Fund make this ministry, and others like it, a reality in areas of great need. Thank you for your generous support.

11. MASSEY CENTRE FOR WOMEN

When the Massey Centre for Women was established 108 years ago to provide support and care for pregnant young women, no one could have imagined the way the Centre would evolve in the future. Starting in 1980, the Centre began to offer residential and educational programs to help young mothers obtain an education and support themselves and their children. In 1989 the programs expanded to include housing, child care, pre-employment services and a Community Program. In 2001, it became a lead agency for the Ontario Early Years program in the Toronto Danforth Riding. Today it is an accredited Children's Mental Health Centre.

One of the challenges today is to be sensitive to the needs of a community as culturally diverse as the City of Toronto. The Centre provides services to children and parents from many different cultures and faiths, and this calls for special knowledge and expertise. The Massey Centre's Board and Staff are working hard at becoming more competent in this area.

In requesting a Mission Support grant, the Centre points out that they serve some of society's most vulnerable members: pregnant teens and their children. "These young girls," they write, "are isolated, discriminated against, homeless and face many hurdles to becoming full contributors to society."

When you give to the Mission and Service Fund you are helping the Massey Centre to give hope and new opportunity to these young women and their children. Please give as generously as you are able.

12. NEW HOPE UNITED CHURCH

When three declining congregations in York Presbytery decided to amalgamate, they made a clean break with the past. Instead of using one of the existing buildings, they decided to redefine their ministry by placing it in the midst of a shopping plaza -the Vaughan Mills Mall.

Visibility is important, especially in an area where only two percent of the people define themselves as "United Church". The area has become largely Roman Catholic, with significant Muslim and Jewish populations as well. Many are new Canadians. In addition to its own services, the church is providing worship, bible study and pastoral care to Chinese speaking immigrants and refugees from Indochina. A Spanish speaking congregation also worships in the building.

Not all the members from the three founding churches made the move to the new congregation, so New Hope United is rebuilding its membership base with new members from diverse backgrounds. Attendance at worship is about fifty people, and the hope is that by year-end this will have grown to 80 or 90. Community outreach is a high priority, and much of this happens jointly with a coalition of community partners. The church has a very attractive web site which promotes the activities and programs being offered.

The space that New Hope United owns in the plaza includes a room large enough to serve as a banquet hall for up to 150 people. A catering service is getting under way which will significantly assist the church's finances. Nevertheless, in these beginning years the congregation is far from self-supporting, in spite of much hard work to make it so. A Mission Support grant is still needed. Your weekly contributions to the Mission and Service Fund help to make this essential new ministry a reality. Thank you for your generous support.