

SPECIAL
SUNDAY

NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES SUNDAY CHILDREN'S MESSAGE



This Children's Message is part of the Native American Ministries Sunday pastor and leader kit and connects with the theme "Holy Presence: Declaring Divine Love." The message can be adapted for your context and integrated into your worship service or Sunday school class.

For this message, include these props: one stick to break and five sticks to bundle together with string

Today, we join other United Methodist churches in celebrating Native American Ministries Sunday. On this special day, we take time to learn about and respect the rich cultures of our United Methodist family members who are Native American. Paul's letter in 1 Thessalonians (CEB) says, "We remember your work that comes from faith, your effort that comes from love, and your perseverance that comes from hope." These principles work together to strengthen us.

This reminds me of a Native American story. A long time ago, when the Peacemaker brought the original Five Nations together under the Great Law of Peace, he demonstrated the confederacy's strength in unity by first taking one arrow and breaking it (Break a stick in half), then bundling five arrows together and showing how the bundle could not be broken (demonstrate the strength of a bundle of five sticks).

Centuries later, in 1775, the Continental Congress sent a delegation of treaty commissioners to Albany to meet with the Six Nations. The treaty commissioners remembered the lesson and John Hancock wrote, "Divided a single man may destroy you—united, you are a match for the whole world." The treaty also invoked the Haudenosaunee symbols of the Tree of Peace: "We live upon the same ground with you—the same island is our common birthplace. We desire to sit down under the same Tree of Peace with you; let us water its roots and cherish its growth, till the large leaves and flourishing branches shall extend to the setting sun and reach the skies."

Today we renew our promise to sit under the same Tree of Peace. Just like the scripture teaches us, our faith, love and hope bring us closer to Jesus and one another. And just like the Native American tradition tells us, we are stronger when we work together.



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church®