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“But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of His heart through all generations.” Psalm 33:11, NIV

“What are you celebrating this year?” It’s not a question we usually ask, especially not in December when the celebrations seem so obvious. Lit-up trees glow in windows; carols play on the radio, and families and friends make plans for Christmas.

In December, we also celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD). Started by the United Nations, it raises awareness about disability issues by advocating for the rights, dignity, and well-being of people with disabilities. This day is important for our organization. On or around December 3, many communities will gather for camaraderie, food, music, crafts, and stories to honour this day and to celebrate the contributions of people with disabilities around the world.

We’re also wrapping up our organization’s 2025 theme **“Celebrate Every Journey.”** We came up with this phrase by asking that simple question: “What are you celebrating this year?” We heard about holidays and vacations, milestone birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, and of course, Christmas. From the Our Voices Matter Council, we heard about Liz finding joy between rounds of illness, Dean attending his friend’s celebration of life, Ian learning to use the library’s new laser cutter, and Ray getting better at public speaking. We also celebrated our organization’s 60th anniversary and the many lives touched by God’s faithfulness through our work in Canada and around the world.

The more stories we heard, the clearer it became: **celebration is a spiritual practice!** It asks us to pause, reflect, and notice God’s faithful love in every season of life. To **Celebrate Every Journey** is to recognize God’s handiwork in each person’s story and purpose. It reminds us of the heart of our mission: that every person is created in the image of God—bearing inherent dignity and value and gifts they can share with the world.

On the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we are reminded that our journeys are not accidental. They are pathways within God’s larger story; we are all many parts of one whole. The image of God is reflected uniquely in every person we support and serve, in their families, and in the staff who walk alongside them. When we Celebrate Every Journey, we celebrate the dignity and

purpose of God in each life. We affirm that people with disabilities, including their strengths and limitations, are reflections of God.

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As we close this year and look forward to 2026, may we continue to grow and promote communities where everybody belongs. In this busy season, may we find moments to pause and celebrate how far we’ve come. And may we always continue to see God in each other.

Merry Christmas and Happy International Day of Persons with Disabilities!

Follow along with Advent resources and events on our social media!



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Making the Connection

- What are some things you are celebrating from this past year? In your work or in your personal life?
- What unique gifts do you have? How do you share those gifts with people in your community?

Celebrations Around Karis:

Joe (middle) also turned 60 this year! He celebrated his birthday with a big party with friends, like Terry (left) and Ray (right).



Kevin and Tim celebrated Karis' anniversary by reading 60 books! They achieved their goal before the year was halfway done – look at that awesome book tracker behind them!



Sylvie and Linda learned how to make quilts at Sudbury Community Participation Supports!