



Mission Possible Newsletter



Spring Edition

The Downtown Mission

2020

Housed and Hopeful



A few weeks ago, the Downtown Mission made changes in its service model to better serve those experiencing homelessness. All programming and support services were reviewed and changes made to increase our efforts and dedicate our resources to truly put forth a Housing First model of service. In the few weeks since these changes were made, dedicated staff have been able to more than double their previous success rate in helping find our Guests experiencing homelessness a permanent home out of shelter.

Take Chris for example. Chris had been a guest at the Sanctuary Program of the Downtown Mission since June of 2019. Had being the operative word! Recently, with the assistance of the Downtown Mission staff, Chris and his partner are now residing in an

apartment about 10 minutes away from the Downtown core as of March 2020.

Participating in the Sanctuary program enabled the couple to access additional Mission programs and services to meet their basic needs while their search for affordable housing was underway. "We are very thankful for Mission staff like Shay, who are so helpful, they go above and beyond." Chris expressed extreme gratitude for the diligence and support of Mission staff in helping them secure a safe and permanent housing option. Both will continue to access the food services and drop-in supports offered by the Mission while they get back on their feet and settle into their new home.

What is Housing First? The basic underlying principle of Housing First is that people are better able to move forward with their lives if they are first housed. Housing First is a homelessness assistance approach which prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life. This approach follows the philosophy that people need to have their basic needs met first and foremost in addition to wrap-around supports such as physical and mental health, education, employment, substance abuse and community connections. Since shifting to a Housing First model on February 17th, 2020, Downtown Mission Staff have been able to focus their days on housing searches, setting up viewings and ensuring guests are deemed

'ready' for housing. Chris and his partner are two of many Windsorites who have experienced homelessness and one of seven housing success stories we have had the privilege of being a part of in these past few weeks. Their story showcases how temporary shelters and the Housing First initiative the Mission supports play a vital role in helping individuals end the cycle of homelessness. Thank YOU for helping find Chris and his partner a home to call their own for today and a new sense of hope for their tomorrows!



Lamentations 3:22-24 - Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him."

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Many Thanks To Our Board of Directors Who Assist With Governance of The Mission

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David Tell, Jeff Slopen, Sandor Kapasi.

A Message from Executive Director, Reverend Ron Dunn

Dear Friends,

The past few weeks have definitely been challenging for many of us here at the Mission and we are sincerely thankful for all of you as you reach out to offer your help and continue to support us with your prayers, your time volunteering and advocating for the Mission and your donations to help those who are hungry, experiencing homelessness or hurting who come to us for basic needs or support to make it today with hope for tomorrow.

Please rest assured that my Team and I have been working tirelessly to ensure that the Downtown Mission would remain in good financial standing for the 2020 year and beyond as we were unable to purchase 850 Ouellette Ave on Feb. 28th as originally planned and make alternate plans. With permission from our Donors, we have put the resources secured for the purchase of 850 Ouellette to purchase the lot of land next to our Wellness Centre at 875 Ouellette where we will build a modest new home for the Mission. The building will have a smaller footprint than the Library but will be sound, accessible and above all else, appropriate and welcoming for the increased numbers of men, women and families coming to us every day for services. It will as well accommodate the complex range of issues we are faced

with daily at the Mission.

We will do everything possible to work with City Officials, the local Business Community and all interested parties to ensure we do what is best for our Guests as we plan our new home, but that it is understood and accepted by our Community as well. While it is being built, the Mission's Day Programming and Meal Service will continue in the basement of 664 Victoria Ave. and our Sanctuary Program will continue as usual at 875 Ouellette Ave. Administration Staff offices will move from 664 Victoria Ave to the vacant 2nd floor of 875 Ouellette Ave for Staff to continue their work relatively uninterrupted.

Now is the time more than ever that we need you to continue believing in the work we do and the impact we make on the most vulnerable in our community! We humbly ask you to please continue supporting us in any way you can. If you have any questions about our current operations or our future plans or would like a tour to see what we're all about in person, I encourage you to reach out to me at ron@downtownmission.com.

Thank YOU as always for your support and friendship! With all we've been faced with at the Mission over the past few months, I faithfully try to keep in mind at all times what Peter said in his letter to the scattered Christians in Asia Minor – 1 Peter 5:10 "And the God of all

grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."

These words are among those meant for leaders, but are a good reminder for all of us to cast our cares on Him in humility and remember to trust that God will bring our suffering to an end and bring us to a place of strength, happiness and hope soon. This is definitely something that I hold on to as the Executive Director of the Downtown Mission but something all who come to the Mission for help can cling to as well. Thank YOU for supporting us through this difficult time, we look forward to celebrating our new home with all of you soon!

Wishing you and yours a wonderful Spring and a truly blessed and happy Easter with your loved ones.

Ron

Reverend Ron Dunn, Executive Director
The United Church Downtown Mission
of Windsor



"Without the Downtown Mission, we would not have a place to go to drop-in. Thank you for providing support to improve our lives." - Raluca



"The Downtown Mission has provided me with lodging and meals. Thank you for being here to help me and for being here to help others." - Gerald



"The Downtown Mission has supported me by providing me a place to go in times of need. When I needed food and clean clothes, they provided both to me. If I needed help with a referral- staff helped me out. Thank you for your support." - Gary



"I am thankful for the Mission because they gave me shelter, food and a place to sleep when I lost my job and things were looking bleak. I really appreciate the staff and what they do for us. A lot of their work goes unnoticed." - James

Coldest Night of the Year or “Warmest Evening of Winter” 2020?

Thank you to ALL who helped plan, came out to participate in or volunteer at or sponsored the Coldest Night of the Year Walk 2020 in Windsor-Essex, hosted by the Downtown Mission. YOU blew all past records and every expectation with 36 Teams, 225 Walkers and 63 Volunteers who together raised awareness and over \$71,000 for the Downtown Mission and those we serve experiencing hunger, homelessness or hurt right here in Windsor-Essex.

The evening was actually a beautiful one, with many not even wanting to wear their trendy, warm CNOY 2020 toque. But all came together for one purpose, to bring awareness to and raise funds for these very real issues faced by so many in our community.

Walking for the first time or the eighth

time, all walked in Windsor, along with 23,655 walkers in 144 cities across Canada and together, we raised as of date of printing (March 6th) \$5,922,110. Once all funds collected are accounted for and results published nationally, there is no doubt that we will as a nation have raised well over the \$6,000,000 goal for this year's Walk.

We're so grateful for all who walked, volunteered and helped raise the much needed funds to help run programs and services of the Downtown Mission, accessed by approximately 1,000 men, women, youth and families every day in Windsor-Essex. Special recognition goes out to our Top 3 Individual Fundraisers – Jeff Gorick (\$7,136), Teri Gorick (\$2,401) and Linda Parks (\$1,495). A special shout out goes to Mary-Jo Kovacs, of the

Mission who also raised \$1,495. As well, special recognition goes out to our Top 3 Fundraising Teams – Returning Champs, the Harrow United Church HUCSTERS who raised an amazing \$16,070.95 (the highest ever raised by a CNOY Team here in Windsor), R.O.C.K with Glenwood United Church (\$5,016.50) and Unifor 444 EFAP Committee (\$4,247.00). Honourable mention goes out to the Emmanuel United Church Striders who were a close 4th with \$4,055.00.

Whether a church group, a group of friends, neighbours, coworkers or even individuals who came out, we appreciate your friendship and support so much and we hope to see you all next year with more friends joining us at CNOY 2021 – Saturday, February 20th, 2021.



Save-the-Date!

We hope to see you at any of our upcoming Events hosted by the Downtown Mission or hosted by our community friends and supporters!


Wed. April 15th – Dine-Out to Donate at Grill Twenty.

Sun. May 31st – A Garden Tea Party
June 8th to 11th and 15th to 18th – Mezzo on a Mission for the Mission

Fri. August 21st – The Downtown Mission Golf Tournament presented by Landscape Effects Group

Sun. August 30th – On a Mission for the Mission Motorcycle Ride brought to you by the Sober Sons Motorcycle Club

Please check for updated information on the above and more upcoming events in support of the Downtown Mission at www.downtownmission.com/events.




THE Downtown Mission

Annual General Meeting 2020

Wednesday, Apr. 29th, 2020
 664 Victoria Ave - Chapel
 Doors Open: 5:30 pm
 AGM: 6:00 pm

The Downtown Mission exists as a Place of Sanctuary. In response to the mandate of the Gospel, through outreach we provide:

- food for the body,
- nurture for the spirit,
- shelter for the homeless,
- advocacy for the impoverished,
- and opportunity for human growth.



RSVP to Salena:
 Phone: 519-973-5573 X 230
 Email: salena@downtownmission.com



Bernard, a Hunger Hero in Every Way!



Bernard Van Camp has volunteered with the Downtown Mission for over 15 years and during that time has been an indispensable member of our Team in every way. Bernard wears several hats at the Mission and is always willing to do anything that is asked of him, from cleaning the windows at the Food Bank to sweeping the Dining Room floors after mealtime to ensure that all who come in for a meal have a clean place where they can be served and enjoy a hearty meal in comfort.

Bernard admittedly spends a lot of time at home with his mother, but says that volunteering at the Mission has allowed him to make deep connections with staff and volunteers and helps him feel useful to his community. In 2018, Bernard was awarded the "Bill and Sue Snider" Award, which annually recognizes one Downtown Mission Volunteer for their unwavering commitment to helping those we serve.

Whether it's his time spent at our Food Bank at the Downtown Mission Wellness Centre at 875 Ouellette Ave or the time he spends in our Dining Hall at 664 Victoria Ave, Bernard Van Camp shows he is a true Hunger Hero. Everyone he encounters at the Mission knows he is happy to be a part of the Mission's Food Services Team and enjoys doing his part to help ensure those who come to the Mission for a hot meal or to pick up food for themselves or their family at the Downtown Mission Food Bank are greeted with a friendly smile and a warm hello when they're blessed to see him on their visit.

If YOU would like to learn more about joining the Downtown Mission's amazing Team of Volunteers, please check out our website at www.downtownmission.com/volunteer or contact Racquele Smith, Manager of Education and Volunteerism at 519-973-5573 X 280 or racquele@downtownmission.com.

The Downtown Mission would not be able to meet the needs of so many in our community without the awesome volunteers who work with us every day, week, month or whenever they can join us either by themselves or with their group of friends, family or coworkers. We invite YOU to join us today and help make a difference in someone's life just by being here and being a part of our Team.

Our Guests Say Thanks



"The Downtown Mission helped me out at a time in my life when I was down. They got me back on my feet, and for that, I am most thankful." - David.



"I am grateful for the support of the Downtown Mission staff because they have helped me get sober, and have provided me with food and shelter. The food is fantastic along with the bright smiles of staff and volunteers. Without them, I could have fallen down a dark path, which I am happy I have avoided." - Brian



"The food services at the Downtown Mission help me get from one day to the next. The staff there gave me direction and support for more community programs." - E.J.

I want to help provide meals and other vital services to the Windsor and Essex County area's homeless.

- \$18.66 to help 6 people
- \$40.43 to help 13 people
- \$62.20 to help 20 people
- \$83.97 to help 27 people

\$..... to feed and care for as many people as possible

Please charge my gift on my credit card (SEE RIGHT)

Please make cheques payable to:
Windsor Downtown Mission

YES

I want to help a hungry, homeless or hurting neighbour today







I would like to make a donation of \$ _____ One time donation Monthly donation

Please charge my gift on my credit card: Card # _____ - _____ - _____ - _____

Expiry Date: _____ / _____ CVV: _____

I support the work of the Windsor Downtown Mission and enclose my donation of \$ _____

Name: _____

Street: _____ Apt#: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Visit www.downtownmission.com for more information or to make a secure online donation (Registered Charity #119260420RR0001)
The Downtown Mission issues charitable donation receipts for all monetary donations.

THE UNITED CHURCH DOWNTOWN MISSION OF WINDSOR INC.
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