

Spring 2016

# Newsletter

“Working together to build a stronger,  
kinder and more just community”

STONEGATE  
MINISTRY



A big  
thank  
you to  
Staples  
&  
Kiwanis!

Stonegate Ministry was the fortunate recipient of a large Staples gift card from The Kingsway Humber Kiwanis Club this past Christmas. Staples donates these cards to the Kiwanis Club for them to give to local charities helping children. Stonegate staff purchased school supplies that were distributed to children in the Stonegate community.

## Get to know one of our volunteers!

In this series highlighting the faithful men and women who volunteer at Stonegate Ministry's outreach store, Great Finds, we want to introduce to you **Christina Koumentakis**.

Christina first discovered the Outreach Store in Stonegate Plaza, as a customer when she lived on Berry Rd. She enjoyed what she found there as a shopper so much that she thought it would be fun to be a volunteer. In 2010 she was welcomed in that role, and as she had never experienced “retail” before she was somewhat nervous of what lay ahead.

Christina is a “people person”, happy to tell everyone how much she enjoyed discovering that she could adapt and learn in a new situation where there was kindness and acceptance shown. She again volunteered with Stonegate Ministry at the summer Farmers' Market before Great Finds was in place, and then joined us at our new location on the Lake Shore in December 2014. Christina is faithful in her 4-hour weekly shift at Great Finds, sharing her people skills with thoughtfulness and humor as she serves our retail customers.

Stonegate Ministry is very grateful for Christina's contribution to the ongoing expression of God's work at Great Finds.

## STONEGATE REDEVELOPMENT

The approval process for the redevelopment of the Stonegate Plaza is in its final stage. Our plaza store was “home” for Stonegate Ministry for many years and was the connecting point for meeting the residents and building relationships that went far beyond just providing quality affordable family clothing. It allowed the Ministry to understand the community needs and respond to at least some of them through our many outreach programs.

The “Infill” development includes three medium rise residential buildings and one commercial building in which we had hoped to gain space. However on February 23, the Toronto Regional Council approved the developer’s application, which did not include our suggested provision for a nonprofit agency such as the Ministry to have space in the redevelopment. As Councillor DiCiano explained, there were “higher priorities”.

While there is an extremely remote chance of space being offered at a later date, we need to focus on where God has led us in the interim and offer programs that will make a difference to the residents in the Lake Shore community around the Great Finds store. We are grateful for the support of the churches in the area and Emily, our Ministry Coordinator is currently running several programs there and is planning to start several others in the coming weeks.



Shop at **GREAT FINDS**, where you can find high quality, gently used items for the whole family



## FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Late last year, we launched our newsletter. In it, we gave an update on the Ministry's activities and programs. We also appealed to the newsletter's recipients for donations. The results were very encouraging. We raised over **\$10,000!** That money will help support the many programs and activities the Ministry undertakes.

Thank you for your generosity and kindness!!



## GREAT FINDS DECORATED FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON!

On Saturday, November 28, 2015, the Youth Groups of Kingsway Baptist Church and Christ Church St. James donated their time, effort and Christmas Spirit to help decorate Stonegate Ministry's Great Finds store. Supervised by their Youth Group Leaders, Jon Matthews and Jon Dykeman, along with volunteers Win Fisher, Elsie Farrugia, Sumitra Robertson, and Store Coordinator Jeannie Martinez, the youth spent their Saturday morning putting up a Christmas tree, several Christmas lights and other decorations throughout the store. By the afternoon, Great Finds was filled with the festive spirit and lots of satisfied and happy youth and volunteers proud of their decorating skills of that day. Many thanks and blessings go out to each one who made this day happen. Decorating Great Finds helped brighten up the days, passing on the Christmas spirit to the customers and volunteers who came to the store!



Thank you to Kingsway Baptist Church and Christ Church St. James Youth Groups!

Thanks to Stonegate Volunteers for their assistance in decorating as well!



## WHAT'S ON AT STONEGATE

Stonegate Ministry's desire is to interact with the community and find out what resources or programs the community needs. From conversations with both social workers and residents we have started the programs below. For more information about any of these programs, please contact 416.523.8611 or [emily.stonegateministry@gmail.com](mailto:emily.stonegateministry@gmail.com).

### 1. **English Conversational Circle:**

English-speaking volunteers partner with residents to practice conversational skills. Vocabulary may be introduced, but the main purpose is on conversation skills. Our desire is to create a safe place for students to interact and ask questions. We meet on Mondays from 1:30-3:00pm at Christ Church St. James.

### 2. **Tuesday Women's Group:**

This women's group from the community enjoy meeting for lunch every Tuesday. The purpose is to create community and to explore topics that touch on spiritual, emotional and physical wellbeing. It is an enjoyable time playing games, eating good food, and listening to speakers or engaging in workshops. We meet on Tuesdays from 12:30-2:00pm at Christ Church St. James.

### 3. **God, Coffee & Me**

This Mimico program explores what Jesus can mean for individuals. We enjoy a cup of coffee together at a local coffee shop and are currently working through the book of Mark. We take time to get to know each other and to ask/answer questions based on the passage presented. The program is held at a local coffee shop on Tuesdays from 3:00-4:00pm.

**THERE ARE OTHER EXCITING PROGRAMS THAT WE ARE WORKING TO  
IMPLEMENT – STAY TUNED!**

You can find Great Finds & our office at 2358 Lakeshore Blvd. West, Etobicoke, M8V 1C3  
416.255.6282 or [stongateministry.ca](http://stongateministry.ca)

Contact Emily Slotegraaf, our Ministry Coordinator at 416.523.8611 or [emily.stonegateministry@gmail.com](mailto:emily.stonegateministry@gmail.com)  
If you would prefer to receive this Newsletter by email, please contact [stonegateministryoffice@rogers.com](mailto:stonegateministryoffice@rogers.com)

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