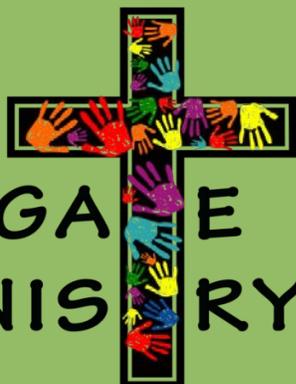


STONEGATE MINISTRY



Newsletter

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

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

After all the disruption from Covid over the past 16 months, and as we begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel, it seems somewhat ironic to realize that this emergence into a ‘new normal’ will bring its own set of difficult decisions and challenges – perhaps especially for organizations that serve the marginalized.

Summer, generally a time for the team to pause and refresh itself for the Fall, will now be used to prepare our programs to either become hybrid to serve clients both online and in person, or to serve both at separate times. For example, we are testing whether we now need to provide an online option for shopping at our Great Finds thrift store (when that is up and running and once more accepting donated goods).

Our Bible Studies likely will be run separately for those who are able to come in person, and for those who have been attending online during the pandemic and need to continue to be reached this way. Each of our other programs will need to be re-assessed in the same manner.

We are eager to bring a new Program Director on board over the summer to help with planning and oversight of these programs – which are currently being handled by a combination of volunteer leaders plus board members.

Many of you will have heard that our CCSJ Food Pantry was nominated as one of the three best such operations (out of almost 200 food banks spread out over the entire City of Toronto.) This is a very encouraging affirmation of our efforts to be safe, respectful and generous to all. Much of this is due to the leadership of Jeannie Martinez, our Great Finds store manager, who is also managing the food bank during the pandemic. See Jeannie’s article for more details.



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All of this will require additional time and money to be properly organized and professionally delivered to those in need – so we are humbly grateful for the support of our community which has enabled Stonegate Ministry to continue to provide food security, hope, care and companionship to those in need over the past many months. *(continued on page 2)*

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Stonegate Ministry is an alliance of local Christian churches working in partnership with the community through shared resources, offering programs and opportunities to build healthy relationships, strong families, a sense of belonging and a deeper relationship with God. We endeavour to address the needs of the whole person and families to bridge toward a better life and to be a faithful voice to ensure everyone in the community is treated with justice and Christian compassion.

(continued from page 1) With the end of government assistance now in sight, we do encourage anyone who is in a position to help the Ministry financially, to do just that, either online through our website, or directly by sending a cheque to the address shown below –

71 Riverview Gardens, Toronto, ON, M6S 4E6

We are grateful for God's blessing of our work through your generosity.



Peter Patterson, Chair Stonegate Ministry Board

CCSJ FOOD PANTRY IS NOMINATED FOR A BEST-IN-CLASS AWARD

Every year, Daily Bread showcases their Annual Food Bank Best-in-Class Awards hosted by television and radio personality Jennifer Valentyne. The **Best-in-Class Awards** recognize individuals and organizations who demonstrate extraordinary commitment to alleviating hunger and poverty in Toronto through raising awareness, corporate social responsibility, fundraising and charitable giving.

This year, Christ Church St. James Food Pantry was honoured to have been among the top three nominees out of hundreds of agencies and organizations, for the **Visionary Food Program Award**. This award recognizes a community food agency in Toronto that has made significant efforts to improve the lives of people accessing food programs. These programs embody inclusivity and create a welcoming, supportive environment for clients. Their volunteer cohort reflects the community that they serve.

Though the eventual winner of the Visionary Food Program Award was Church of the Redeemer, the nomination confirms the strength of Christ Church St. James Food Pantry's community-minded service. This nomination would not have been possible without the dedicated support of Christ Church St. James Anglican Church and the strong partnership of Stonegate Ministry, as well as community partners like Daily Bread, Second Harvest and Stonegate Community Health Centre.



We dedicate our nomination to all the volunteers, staff and donors who, despite a pandemic, continue to commit their time and resources to helping people in need. Good things happen when people get together to do good things! We are truly grateful and thankful for everyone's generosity and support in helping us achieve such an honour!

To view the Daily Bread Food Bank 2021 Best in Class Awards, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mInSznoY1C4>

Jeannie Martinez, Manager of Great Finds and CCSJ Food Pantry

STONEGATE MINISTRY RECEIVES GOVERNMENT GRANT FOR SUMMER STUDENT

We would like to welcome Aya Kinsey, our new summer student at Stonegate Ministry who will be performing duties for the Ministry and CCSJ Food Pantry for the months of July and August. *Welcome Aya!*

HERE's a Question for US . . .

Our Vision Statement (parenthesis added) reads-

“Working Together, (with the Local Church), to Build a Stronger, Kinder, and more Just Community.”

Stonegate Ministry is supported by and works hand in hand with local church communities. So, when those we serve read our Mission Statement and know the connection the ministry has with the church, what do you think comes to mind? After all, the ministry is in many ways ‘church with the sleeves rolled up’. We are in this together.



A recent North American study by BARNAs asked people how they viewed the church.

The response? ... only 21% of non-Christians had a positive perception of ‘church’ – that’s only one in five.

The study noted that a large segment of people believes the local church is detached from ‘the real issues’ people are facing and is out of touch with the needs of their community. In a word, they don’t believe the church really cares. How do you serve a community that doesn’t believe you care?

A few thoughts spring to mind:

- a. **Let’s accept it.** People are sceptical because of what they’ve seen, heard or experienced. Let’s not blame them. It’s on us. Let’s ‘fess up. The Bible word is ‘repent’, - for real. No excuses. Let’s just come clean. If our objectives have been mixed, if complacency has taken a toll, if our passion to love our neighbours as ourselves has lacked ‘oomph’, let’s admit it. *“Lord, we need more than a boost. Please, relight the fire. Clean us up”.*
- b. **Let’s be the opposite** of what 4 out of 5 people expect us to be. Let’s ‘do faith’ for real, to be loving, compassionate, talk it, and walk it. As the old saying goes ‘no one cares how much you know unless they know how much you care’.

From where I sit, the heartbeat of Stonegate Ministry really is about a genuine concern for the health and wellbeing of the people who live in the community. The vision statement of *building a stronger, kinder and more just community* is more than words. Such dedicated service is not only the right thing to do; it actually builds a bridge for people to consider the Christ who loves them and wants to ‘do life’ with them.



As Stonegate Ministry prepares for the next chapter, may the love and witness of this outreach cause the 4 out of 5 to stop, look and listen again. Amen?

Bruce Smith, on assignment to Stonegate Ministry

Vacancy for Program Director

Stonegate Ministry is looking for a **Director of Ministry Program**. This position is responsible for developing, promoting and running a wide array of programs for members of our two communities. Sam Coelho, our previous Program Director, who did an excellent job of identifying the needs of the community and developing partnerships with existing community agencies accepted a position that was closer to her home and provided a growth opportunity for her. Sam will be missed by all.

(continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3)

Skills/Experience required:

- Experience or keen interest and aptitude in developing and running community programs, counselling, promoting charities and working on fundraising events
- Good oral, written and computer communication skills

If you know of anyone who may be interested in this position, they may submit their resume to Horace Knight at knight.associates@rogers.com by July 31, 2021.

DONATING TO STONEGATE MINISTRY

There are now **4 ways** you can donate to the ministry:

- Online by credit card
- By mailing a cheque
- By the gift of your time in volunteering
- By donating quality goods to Great Finds (after Great Finds is open once again)



When you visit our website stonegateministry.ca to donate online, you will notice that we are now using a charity donation platform called **SimplyK**. It is the only platform in Canada that ensures 100% of your donation is actually received by the ministry. All other platforms deduct their fee from your donation amount.

SimplyK do have costs to process donations, which are in the neighbourhood of 3%. Like all platforms, they ask if you would consider adding a voluntary contribution to help with these costs. **SimplyK** always suggests an amount, often higher than 3% - we want our donors to feel free to change that suggested amount to whatever you would like to add, including nothing at all.

We would welcome any feedback as we are always trying to make any transaction with you as friendly and efficient as possible.

Pete Pynenburg, Treasurer

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFUL SUPPORT OF STONEGATE MINISTRY!

CONTACT US

Your Donation is important to maintain our outreach during this difficult time. You can contribute either:

By cheque mailed to **Stonegate Ministry, 2358 Lake Shore Blvd. W. Toronto, M8V1B6**

OR

By going to **our website** below and clicking on the "Donate Now" button.

All donations are promptly acknowledged and a receipt will be sent at year end. Thank you for your prayers and ongoing financial support, and may God bless you and keep you safe during this trying time.

Contact us at 416-255-6282 or office@stonegateministry.ca

Stonegate Ministry is a registered non-profit charity.

Donations may be made by cheque or online at www.stonegateministry.ca

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