



Stonegate Community Ecumenical Ministry

2020 Annual Report

For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2020

2020 Annual Report

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Stonegate Ministry

Vision

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

Mission

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 that everyone in the community is treated with justice and Christian compassion.

Core Values

Stonegate Ministry is committed to:

The wellbeing of the individual: We will endeavor at all times to treat each person with kindness and respect while giving special attention to those who find themselves marginalized. To the best of our ability we will provide aid to ensure the basics to those in need: safety, food, shelter, support (economic, social, spiritual and emotional), while engaging in skill-building in order to develop people.

Building healthy community: We will actively work to reduce isolation and loneliness and to provide opportunities to build healthy relationships.

Christian witness: we will endeavor at all times to be a visible and articulate Christian witness to those around us.

Stewardship: We are committed to effective use of our resources at every level of the organization while striving for excellence. We consider the resources we are given to be God's gifts of time, money and talent.

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Report of the Chair

Never has it been more appropriate for our Annual Report to begin with a very sincere thank you to our volunteers, donors and partner churches for their incredible work and support over the past year. Without this support, our community would have suffered the loss of key programs providing food security, companionship to ward off the effects of isolation, assistance with online learning, activities for children and young people, as well as mental and spiritual sustenance.

The Stonegate Board of Directors, drawn from its six member churches, has always been very engaged in all of its programs but never has this been more obvious than during the worst pandemic in generations. As the response to the pandemic has threatened to close down our programs to those most marginalized, members have jumped in with both feet to try to keep alive our services to those in need. Although half of our revenue disappeared with the required closing of our thrift store, Great Finds, we made an immediate decision to maintain our staff – both for their own sakes, and because we clearly could not maintain our services without their skills and leadership.

Fortunately, we were able to qualify for the government Wage Subsidy program. This allowed us to continue the operation of the CCSJ Food Pantry, supplying food and supplies to families most in need. Continuing the food bank meant arranging for supplies from Daily Bread, obtaining PPE equipment to keep staff and clients safe, purchasing cleansing and disinfecting supplies, and delivering the food to needy families waiting outside the building.

We were also able to continue programs online through Zoom which countered isolation and loneliness, allowing people, many elderly, to continue to meet virtually, rather than in person. They were offered companionship, support, and hope for the future through these regular community gatherings. We are grateful for our faithful 'Prayer for You' team that has continued to pray for both the governance issues of the Ministry and the needful communities that we serve.

We held our first virtual fundraiser dinner on November 7 – so none of the usual fine food and stimulating conversation. Nonetheless, our donor community was so generous that our online event attracted many attendees and was as financially successful as our usual in-person gatherings.

Despite their own financial challenges, our members churches did not waiver in their financial support of the Ministry, and many individuals and organizations stepped up their support, both to the Ministry and to the food bank, so that there was no break in our service to the

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community. Without this generosity, given the loss of revenue from our thrift store, we would not have been able to enter the second year of the pandemic in good shape and certain of our ability to continue our service to those most vulnerable.

As we go forward into an upcoming year of further uncertainty, we thank God for His blessings on His Ministry over the past twelve months and pray for His direction and guidance in 2021.

With gratitude,
Peter Patterson, Chair

Treasurer's Report

2020 was a difficult year for most charities and the Ministry was no exception. Thanks to the pandemic, the clothing store, Great Finds, was closed more than it was open. In addition, the Ministry lost the store when the landlord refused to renew the lease. The net result was that store revenue plummeted from \$94,000 in 2019 to only \$29,000 in 2020.

This should have left the Ministry with a massive deficit. Fortunately, there were a number of factors that mitigated this. The first was that the income from the partner churches remained steady. I had feared there would be a substantial drop in support from the churches but they remained steadfast in their support of the Ministry. I am thankful for that. The second factor was that the Ministry's fundraising efforts generated \$9,000 more in 2020 than in 2019. My thanks to the donors who supported Stonegate Ministry. The third mitigating factor is that expenses were substantially lower. With the store closed for a good part of the year, store expenses dropped to \$26,000 from \$41,000 a year earlier. Staff costs dropped by \$15,000, mainly because store manager coverage was not required. The pandemic prevented programs from being run. Program costs dropped from \$27,000 in 2019 to \$8,000 in 2020. The final factor that offset a large potential loss was \$36,000 of government support. The Ministry took advantage of CEWS (Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy) and other government programs to minimize the pandemic's impact on its financial situation.

The net result of all this is that the Ministry basically broke even in 2020. The cash position is still strong.

I would like to thank the Board for their support and guidance during the year. I also would especially like to thank the Ministry's supporters and donors for their prayers and financial support during the year.

Pete Pynenburg, Treasurer

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Human Resources Report

Like staff in all organizations, adjusting to the work demands during the pandemic was difficult for our staff. With very little notice from government officials, they were forced to abandon plans they had in place and adapt to a situation with no plan, little guidance and frequently changing directives.

Our ministry programs operate on a seasonal basis and are prepared the season before. In March 2020 our Ministry Program Director was operating a full range of in-person programs. Her clients covered most age groups from school children to seniors. The transition from in-person programs to virtual programs was extremely challenging for many clients in these groups. The difficulty was caused by the absence of a computer to allow them to participate in Zoom conferences and/or the ability to interact with the technology. As a result, attendance in many of the programs was drastically reduced. However, our staff served those who were available and provided support to the food bank.

Our store closed in March in accordance with public health direction. We reopened during the summer with greatly reduced store hours and eventually closed the operation in the fall. The pandemic severely impacted the ability of our dedicated volunteers, on whom we rely heavily, to report for their normal hours. Given the limited hours of operation and the decision of the store landlord to reduce the floor space, the Ministry decided to temporarily halt operation and assign staff to the food bank. Our staff have really appreciated the opportunity to continue to contribute during this difficult period.

On behalf of the board, we would like to thank our staff for their heroics during the pandemic.

Graeme Quigley and Horace Knight (Chair)

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Ministry Program Report

As you would expect, most of the programs planned for 2020 were impacted by the pandemic. In many cases we were able to pivot to an online or other 'safe' approach. This was especially important for those programs for clients who were particularly impacted themselves by Covid-19.

Our two women's community groups, *Circle of Friends* (partnering with Christ Church St James) and *Ladies Circle by the Lake* (partnering with Martin Luther church), could no longer meet in person for lunch and companionship, but they did continue online. The facilitators did a great job enabling these virtual gatherings, which provided the opportunity for friends to continue to meet and talk, thereby reducing the sense of isolation for many of the participants. Interesting programs were offered with outstanding guest speakers. All look forward to regathering in person when that becomes possible.

God, Coffee, and Me, run by Bruce Smith, is a weekly bible study originally meeting at Nimman Thai Restaurant. Currently, it is on Zoom due to Covid-19. We were able to sustain and manage the program throughout the year, with grateful attendees.

Get Reading! gathers books from donors and the public library and distributes them to children and adults at the food bank. These books are received with alacrity as parents and children are eager for new reading material, particularly in these insular times.

Anchors for the Soul, a 10-week grief and loss program, following the video series on Right Now Media and so needful right now, was held online in collaboration with CCSJ.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) aims to support people who struggle with handling their finances and who are working to pay off debt. The program offers practical budgeting tools in order to teach healthy money management. This was postponed this year, and we hope to conduct a three-day session in the summer of 2021.

Kids Homework Club was a key element in the Ministry's efforts to engage children in the community. Children in the Stonegate Community need homework support and we were able to run this program twice a week initially out of the Health Centre, and later on Zoom. Our hope for this program is to eventually turn it into an afterschool Kids' Club where young people could get a snack, play some games, do their homework, and receive holistic support.

Prayer for You is a small group of women making up a wonderful prayer team that will respond to prayer requests from the Ministry itself as well as from clients. Their very presence adds so much to our program initiatives.

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We are, of course, looking forward to restarting some other programs, and initiating even more new programs as we look toward being able to be physically present for our community in the coming year. These include such items as offering ESL classes, beginning a free Tax Clinic, engaging newcomers to Canada with a potluck meal, providing a summer camp experience for children along the Lakeshore in concert with Martin Luther church, and perhaps even establishing a 'Hub' for young people to drop in after school.

We are so grateful for the partners that work with us to enable these programs, and for the incredible program facilitators who spend countless hours serving our community and loving our neighbours by making these programs happen!

Peter Patterson, Chair

Great Finds and CCSJ Food Bank Report

2020 turned out to be a year full of events that we could never have anticipated. The outbreak of Covid-19 brought forth over a year of change and upheaval that has challenged our regular way of life. Even today, we continue to deal with the challenges and struggles of the pandemic. Having been the Store Manager for Great Finds Thrift Store for the last seven years, I have seen the growth and significant impact the store has made in the community. I have gotten to know many of the customers who visit the store. For some, it is a place for family and friends to meet and shop together to look for great deals. But for most, Great Finds is a store that helps families on budget constraints stretch their dollar further. Many just don't have the budget to buy new clothing or housewares and rely on Great Finds to provide them with quality goods without having to sacrifice their food needs or other bills. However, like other businesses, Great Finds had to close during the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

While Great Finds was closed, my work as Co-Director at Christ Church St. James Food Pantry became even more crucial. Prior to Covid-19, we served 600 to 800 individuals each month, providing a value of over \$250,000 worth of food annually. The closure of businesses due to Covid-19 affected many jobs and home situations, putting pressure on food banks to have adequate levels of food supplies to accommodate the increase in food bank clients. In fact, the number of clients attending our food bank increased over 30% and we have seen many new families needing the services of our food bank. To meet these needs, we have had to purchase additional supplies and extend our hours of operations. Even with the support of our generous donors, we continue to face food shortages as the numbers of clients continue to climb.

Covid-19 also forced us to rethink our policies and procedures in not only how we serve our clients but also how we work within our environment. The uppermost priority is the health and safety of our clients, volunteers and staff. Having protective gear is critical in continuing to

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serve families in need. In addition to purchasing more food this year at the food bank, we have also had to purchase PPE and sanitizing supplies.

As my work at the food bank continued, Great Finds was able to re-open in July for only two days – Mondays and Tuesdays – due to the majority of our senior volunteers having to safely stay home. We went from having a volunteer team of 30 down to a team of five. Many of our customers were not only happy to see us re-open but also very grateful that we did.

To help those who were feeling the financial pressure Covid-19 was bringing, we put all of our goods on 50% off and continued to promote this sale.

Great Finds also resumed our Benevolence program. This program grants the homeless and families in need the ability to shop at the store for a certain allotment each month. Even with our four-month closure, Great Finds was still able to provide a value of over \$6,000 worth of goods to the homeless and families in need.

As we navigated and adapted to the many challenges and uncertainties that the Covid-19 pandemic had presented us, unfortunately, it also affected our situation for leasing our location at 2358 Lake Shore Blvd. West. As a result, though Great Finds had recently re-opened in July, we found ourselves having to close our doors in September temporarily until a new location is secured.

Up until our moving day, many customers came by to express their sadness about the temporary closure of Great Finds. Many brought us treats as parting gifts or thank you cards wishing us well and recounting the stories of how our store had impacted their lives. As the Covid-19 pandemic continues, at our new location wherever it is, we will continue to ensure the health and well-being of our customers, volunteers, staff and the community we serve. Our goal is to continue to serve in the Mimico/Lake Shore neighbourhood and to have more retail space in order to provide our clients with an even broader selection. While we search for a new store location, we continue our essential work at the CCSJ Food Pantry in our mission to work together to build a stronger, kinder, and more just community especially now during this time of struggle for so many.

We thank all who continue to provide their support!

We look forward to seeing you again soon at a newly furnished store!

Jeannie Martinez, Great Finds Store Manager & CCSJ Food Bank Co-Director

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'Prayer for You' Report

It continues (since 2012) to be a great pleasure for our 'Prayer for You' team to uphold in prayer all aspects of Stonegate Ministry. It has been a challenging year for the Ministry, as it has been for all outreach ministries, but God has given us His grace to continue interceding for Stonegate.

The members of the prayer team, committed to the privilege of praying for Stonegate Ministry, are the following:

Carol-Anne Foty, Eleanor Cawthorne, Karin Disselkoen, Cathie Cade, Rev Nancy Webb, Shirley Ingram and Coordinator: Phyllis Ortiz

Even though, because of the Pandemic, we could not meet personally to pray, we were encouraged by the opportunity to pray by phone, and ZOOM became the method we used for our monthly meetings. We are continuing to observe God's answers to prayer as we intercede for the Ministry.

Our "Impact Stonegate" group meetings have been held once a month on ZOOM and Samantha Coelho was in attendance at those meetings during her tenure, to give us updates and her own prayer requests.

Other prayer needs coming to us were handled by phone or email.

I believe our group of praying women feels the most encouraged during the times that we observe God's answers for specific needs that Stonegate Ministry has been encountering. And we would ask you, too, when you read my short report, to have the desire to intercede for Stonegate and to praise God for this important ministry.

Submitted by Phyllis Ortiz, Coordinator

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Facilities Report

For the past two years we have been searching for a larger location to hold not only our store, but also a small amount of space for our Program Director. Our search did not come up with anything suitable. In July, however, our landlord of 2358 Lake Shore informed us she would be making renovations to our space. She would create a small apartment at the back and put in a staircase to the basement. We would have to move out while this was done and when it was finished, we would have only 800 sq. ft. left with only a partial basement. Since we have been looking for more space and not less, this was not suitable.

We extended the moving date until October 2020. During that time we removed the lift we had put in and started to put everything in boxes. The store had many sales and the balance of the inventory was put into storage in a storage place on Kipling Ave. Even though we did not have a place to call home it was probably a blessing in disguise because during Covid 19, we could not open and the cost to store the items was far less than the cost to pay rent and utilities.

We continue to look for larger premises in Mimico in order to continue our ministry in the area.

Gord Glandfield, Facilities Chair

Publicity Report

Stonegate Ministry has two main channels to provide news and updates on the ministry to both our faithful followers and to anyone seeking information on the web.

The Newsletter is distributed to about 300 supporters every quarter with articles contributed by our staff and board. Occasionally, the Master Donor list is used to send out special news or invitations to events such as the annual Victoria Day Sizzler and the fall fund raising dinner. Unfortunately, we had to turn to a virtual fund raiser by Zoom in 2020, which was a new experience for both the ministry and our supporters. The Sizzler, which normally attracts hundreds from the neighbourhood around Christ Church St. James, has been cancelled for the last two years due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

The Publicity committee also monitors, updates and makes improvements to the website in order to make it an effective tool for those seeking information on the ministry. The site needs constant attention as programs are continually changing and improvements can always be made.

Moira Grant, Jeannie Martinez and Graeme Quigley (Chair)

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2020 Board of Directors

BARNES, Angela

Vice Treasurer
angelabarnes@hotmail.com
Mimico Baptist Church

KNIGHT, Horace

Board Vice-Chair, Co-Chair Human Resources
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All Saints Kingsway Anglican

PYNENBURG, Pete

Treasurer
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Christ Church St. James' Anglican Church

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Stonegate Ministry

Balance Sheet

Consolidated – 2020

ASSETS

Bank accounts	93134
Investments	80000
Other assets	4082
TOTAL ASSETS	177216

LIABILITIES

Food vouchers	5440
Other current liabilities	10957
Bank loan	30000
Subtotal Current Liabilities	46397

EQUITY

Reserve – Development Fund	40000
Retained earnings	90819
TOTAL EQUITY	130819

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	177216
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2020 Income and Expense Summary

Audit Reviewed

INCOME	Support from churches	\$55,526
	Fundraising	\$49,947
	Store revenue	\$28,990
	Government Support	\$36,090
	Other income	\$1,446
	TOTAL INCOME	\$171,999
EXPENSES	Ministry Expenses	
	Store costs	\$25,553
	Staff costs	\$124,201
	Program costs	\$7,691
	Administration	
	Moving costs	\$5,595
	Administration	\$8,449
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$171,489
	EXCESS/DEFICIT	\$510