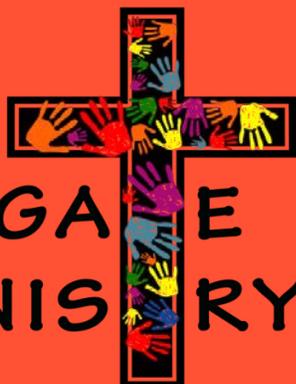


STONEGATE MINISTRY



Newsletter

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

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

While definitely not inferring that the pandemic is “in our rear mirror” it has been a real delight recently to see how our clients have welcomed the opportunity afforded by the lessening infection rate in Ontario combined with an incredibly warm Fall, to actually get outside to safely see and talk to one another for the first time in months.

One example of this has been the Circle of Friends women’s group, facilitated by Kathleen Mahaffey and Sue Hill, which has met together now for five straight autumn Tuesdays, to share conversation, tell stories, and rebuild the loving community that has been so missed. Sessions like these have been a God-send to Natalie Sharpe, our new Program Director, as she meets clients for the first time and learns about the neighbourhood and community that she has joined.

Natalie herself has already been a wonderful addition to the work of the Ministry with her evident care for our clients, and willingness to do whatever is needed at the moment. She is an ordained Pentecostal minister who believes strongly in the effectiveness of a Christ-centred ecumenical team. Natalie is experienced with various forms of social media and is comfortable teaching others (even young people themselves) how to make best use of these. She has demonstrated herself to be a strong communicator, and, when invited, will undoubtedly be comfortable speaking on behalf of our Ministry to any gathering.

The arrival of Natalie to serve with us is largely due to the acumen and efforts of Horace Knight, who has been a member of the Stonegate Ministry board for the past decade. Horace led the search committee that introduced the opportunity to Natalie, met and talked about it with her, and recommended her to the Board. He has provided outstanding leadership to the Board in his time with us, which is now ending as Horace has accepted other key community-serving invitations. We will deeply miss Horace’s expertise, but we are very grateful for his latest contribution to the Ministry in finding Natalie for us.



As we look forward to continuing much needed programs for those marginalized and isolated, and under Natalie’s leadership, adding creative new programs to support these clients, we are preparing for the annual gathering of our community of supporters to hear how Christ has blessed our work over the past year, and to aid us as we go forward in demonstrating His love and care for the neighbourhood.

(continued on page 2)

IN THIS ISSUE:

A Word from the Chair	Page 1
An excellent start . . .	Page 2
Is your God the great I am?	Page 3
Offering Life & Hope	Page 3
Pray for Jeannie	Page 4

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) We have an online event planned for this purpose on Thursday evening November 18th, beginning at 7:30. The hour-long program will include a word from those on the Ministry front-lines, interspersed with lovely music from our congregations that many of us have so missed in recent times.

We will offer more details in the next few weeks, but meanwhile please 'Hold the Date – Nov 18th'

In closing let me bring to your attention one of the seldom-mentioned downsides of the pandemic – that medical conditions that would have been diagnosed and dealt with expeditiously, instead linger and fester. That is true of our own Jeannie Martinez, who is dealing with difficult and painful consequences of non-diagnosis. We all know how incredibly valuable Jeannie has been for the Ministry, as an indomitable leader with a wonderful sense of humour, sincere humility and such a gracious manner to all. We are thankful and blessed that inadvertently the issue did come to light, and pray that Jeannie's treatment is effective and that her recovery is complete in every sense.



We pray that all of you feel safe on God's arms. Thank you for your prayers, time commitment, and financial assistance that has made 30 years of ministering to our community possible!

Peter Patterson, Chair Stonegate Ministry Board

AN EXCELLENT START . . .

I have had such a warm welcome to Stonegate Ministry and have seen that we are a beam of light shining in what can be a bleak moment in someone's life... maybe they are having trouble finding their next meal, just arrived in a whole new world, or just need a group of friends to talk to. People need to experience the love of God in so many different ways.



It was an awesome experience to witness the tenacious attitude of the staff who have endured the challenges brought on by the pandemic. Many of us were introduced to a new way of communication and were urged to adapt new methods of reaching out and connecting with others that may have been unfamiliar. Indeed, there were many obstacles but nothing with the ability to stop this good work from being accomplished. This is a testament to me that the grace and guidance of God is with us.

I met many wonderful staff members and the clients of each program. While participating with the **Circle of Friends** I was able to experience infectious smiles, engaging conversations and uplifting fellowship. During **God, Coffee and Me** I was captivated by an inspiring dive back into the book of 1 Thessalonians. And the **Foodbank** proved to be a heartbeat of this community that continues to bring hope and compassion to many experiencing challenges of their own. I sat down with the facilitators of many of the programs getting the opportunity to see their heart and passion to provide programs that will help to change lives. I was also encouraged to learn that a powerful team, **Prayer For You** is dedicated to effectual and fervent prayer for the ministry and the community.



It is truly my pleasure to be a part of such a committed organization that is demonstrating the necessity of living fruitfully in today's world. I have been reassured even in my short time here that working together for one common goal for the better of this world is both possible and necessary.

Natalie Sharpe, Director of Ministry Programs

Is your God the great / AM... or is He only the great / WAS? - Why "God, Coffee...and me!" keeps on - keeping on

For those who have been making the effort to stay connected through "God, Coffee and me" each week, there is no interest in a history lesson about Jesus. The earnest desire is to *discover Who He is, What He did for us, and What our lives* might look like if we take Him seriously.

When people challenged Jesus about His identity, he was quick to reply with I AM: "Before Abraham was, I AM". He would then go on in detail to outline what that can mean for each and every one of us. For instance:

- I AM the Bread of Life –
 - find your strength and sustenance in Me
- I AM the Light of the World –
 - no need to stumble through life anymore
- I AM the Resurrection and the Life –
 - no fear in life or in death
- I AM the door –
 - the way to God is wide open now
- I AM the Good Shepherd –
 - I'll lead, you follow. Really!
- I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life –
 - find liberty in learning from/listening to Me
- I AM the Vine –
 - stay close so we can do life together and your life can blossom.



It is all so very personal, so very practical, and so very possible. We don't gather as a group to hear about *Who He was*....we gather to discover *Who He is* and what a relationship with Him might mean in our daily lives.

Right now in our Tuesday afternoon discovery times, we are 'trucking through' 1st Thessalonians. With pencil in hand, we look at the Scripture & scribble down these little markers by each verse as we go:

- ! = this is powerful!
- ? = this confuses me.
- * = this is important
- 😊 = this is brand new to me

And then we share our observations, wrapping up the hour with a word of prayer together.



Would you be interested in joining us? There is an empty chair with your name on it. Until we have the 'all clear' to resume gathering in a coffee shop, we are presently meeting at 194 Park Lawn Road (Christ Church St James), just a stone's throw north from the Queensway. The day and time: **3pm, Tuesdays**. We'd love to welcome you to join us on the journey.

Bruce Smith, on assignment to Stonegate Ministry

Save the date!
Thursday, November 18, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

OFFERING LIFE AND HOPE

An evening with Stonegate Ministry

Once again, Stonegate Ministry is holding our annual fundraiser on Zoom, where you will:

- Meet our new Director of Ministry Programs, **Natalie Sharpe**
- Hear staff reports on their ministries
- Enjoy musical selections from our member churches
- Get updated on the Great Finds relocation, the Food Bank and the Ministry's future plans

Buy your tickets online on our website www.stonegateministry.ca

OR

By sending a cheque to Stonegate Ministry, 71 Riverview Gardens, Toronto M6S 4E6

Please pray for Jeannie, our Great Finds store manager and Food Bank co-manager as she recovers from recent surgery. Her regular article will resume in the next Newsletter.



CONTACT US

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

By cheque mailed to **Stonegate Ministry, 71 Riverview Gardens, Toronto, M6S 4E6** 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

Editor – Graeme Quigley

Layout and Graphics – Priscilla Knight

This newsletter is available by email or hard copy. To change your preference, or unsubscribe, contact the office.