

PENNIES AND SPARROWS 2023/24 ANNUAL REPORT 10TH ANNIVERSARY!



“For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. 2 Corinthians 5:1”

Pennies and Sparrows has now been running for 10 years! Each year we have had a great deal to learn. As we have gotten to know the community of Saint John - its wonderful attributes and its challenges - we have felt called to respond to the needs around us. From the 2016 influx of Syrian refugees, to opening an emergency shelter in the dead of winter in 2022, we have held space for those who are struggling in our community.

Currently, Saint John - and most urban centres across the country - are experiencing an influx of visible homelessness. Tent encampments have cropped up in various places, neighbourhoods are experiencing increases in theft and other crime, and there is a general sense of instability as rents increase and food costs soar.

In the midst of all of this we open the doors of Stone church to welcome people: the unhoused or under-housed, newcomers to Canada, seniors, children and youth, those who are looking to help others, and those who are looking for help. We offer a space that is welcoming and that aims to alleviate the burdens of loneliness and need.

Throughout the years we have come to do this in several ways:

- Weekday drop-in: serving coffee, tea, and snacks. We are also able to provide haircuts, health services through a community nurse, connections to housing services through Fresh Start Outreach Workers, clothing, hygiene items, art supplies, and connection to staff and volunteers.
- Foodie Fridays: A program where participants cook a meal together and then eat together.
- English Language Classes for newcomers and English Language camps for newcomer children.
- Emmaus Way Teams: offering teams of support for individuals and families who are going through unstable circumstances.
- Kids Lead Programs: teaching kids about community development, the role of non-profits, and how to respond to social issues.
- One on one supports to those who come through our doors.
- We also support and partner with other non-profits in the area by attending board meetings, sitting on committees for the city, and meeting with community leaders and representatives to work towards better solutions.

We rely entirely on Jesus for the patience and strength to do this work, for provision for funding, and for those willing to support what we do. As the community struggles grow, so does our need for prayer and funding.

Rev. Terence and Rev. Jasmine Chandra

Pennies and Sparrows Timeline:

July 2nd 2014

- Pennies and Sparrows (then called Central Saint John Community Ministry) is launched thanks to partnerships with Stone Church and the Diocese of Fredericton.

July 2014- July 2015

- Learn about the Community. Meet everyone we possibly can.
- Get to know other non-profits and what they do.
- Start volunteering at the Food Basket, Outflow, The Pregnancy Resource Centre, P.U.L.S.E, The Elizabeth Fry Society, The ELF Program, and Safe Harbour.
- Start the English Language Cafe (Nov 2014),

2015

- Present at the Vital church planting conference in Toronto.
- Partner with ICYM and The Vineyard Church to have a Youth group in the area.
- Start volunteering at the Teen Resource Centre.

2016

- Served on welcome teams for Syrian refugee influx.
- Start an afternoon drop-in program.
- Sophia House prayer sessions.
- Food Security meetings.
- Helped Launch a Mom's group in partnership with the Vineyard church.
- Messy Church

2017

- Start Emmaus Way teams as a way of supporting individuals and families that are in unstable circumstances.
- Participate in Food Security conversations and host Everybody Eats Forum.
- ESL Bible Study starts.

2018

- IAARCUM.
- KAIROS.
- Kids Lead program starts.

2019

- Brunswick Court drop-in.

- ACE's training and train the trainer.
- Art of Prayer program at Sophia House.

2020

- SACIT training.
- COVID, Emergency Food program,
- PREVOM - partnership with Sam de Cham.
- Partner with Waterloo Village Neighbourhood Association
- Start seniors program
- Offered online ESL classes and Bible studies during the pandemic.

2021

- Present a workshop at the RADVO conference in Dallas Texas.
- Family Connection program started in partnership with Inner City Youth.
- Inclusive Housing Research project.

2022

- Hire Miriam Westin to teach English, help with drop-in.
- Miriam creates the Foodie Friday Program.
- Run an emergency shelter for 5 weeks.
- Terence begins volunteering as a Father Mentor at the Pregnancy Rescue Centre.
- Increase Community Drop-in to 3 times a week.
- CCH Meetings.
- ESL Summer Camp.

2023

- Hire Clare Andrews to teach English and run the summer English Language camps.
- SD to fund a position for the Waterloo Village Neighbourhood Association - helping us with drop-in and other programs.

2024

- Now 10 years old!
- We have plans to expand our Foodie Friday program to make it available on a wider scale.
- We continue with many ongoing programs that have been created to meet specific and identifiable needs in the community.

After 10 years, here are the services and programs that we are currently offering. Every year brings change and new needs, so we try to adapt with new ideas.

The Drop-In Program

Three afternoons a week we welcome people from the community to come in and take a load off. We serve coffee, hot chocolate and snacks. Many of those who come are homeless, others are underhoused, others simply have nowhere to go and nothing to do during the day. During these times we try to provide other services such as art supplies, hair cuts, and counselling. We also have days where we play music games, or have guests play Bingo. As issues of homelessness increase, so do our numbers. We have noticed that especially in the colder months, our drop-in can be a high needs environment where desperation and emotions run high.

Foodie Fridays

Every Friday at 11:30am we invite anyone who would like to join us to cook together and eat together. Most Fridays there are 12-20 people preparing the meal. It is a very diverse group and the meals are always nutritious and plentiful. If you're in the area you're welcome to come by and cook, or just share in the meal (usually served around 1pm). It's a wonderful community initiative that has been spearheaded by Miriam Westin. Miriam is currently considering ways to expand this program.



Youth Connection

We partner with Saint John Inner City Youth Ministry to provide a weekly youth program. We always start with a meal, then have games and activities and a devotional. Youth connection is geared towards 10-14 year olds, but we have some younger siblings attend as well. Each year we have several special outings to hockey games, the theatre, the aquatic centre, or the bowling alley.



English Language Programs

Thanks to our wonderful staff - Miriam Westin and Clare Andrews we are able to offer beginner and intermediate English Language classes for newcomers and refugees. Clare also runs an after school English Language program for kids. During the summer Clare organizes several weeks of summer camps for kids with a focus on learning English. Terence was able to fulfil a long term dream of having an ESL Vacation Bible School week this past summer. Along with Clare and some great volunteers, the week long camp taught English and the Bible together. Everyone agreed that there was something special about that week - a heightened sense of connection and community. When it came time for Terence to do the Bible story for the day that was complete silence and the kids gave their full attention to each word. Truly a highlight of the summer!

Emmaus Way

There have been about 12 Emmaus Way teams that have run over the last 7 years. Currently, there are 3 on the go. While we started out focusing on the Saint John areas, we've also had teams in Fredericton, Hampton and Sussex. There is a team potentially starting up in Moncton and some interest for us to come present to a church in Ontario that is looking into beginning some Emmaus Way teams there. We recently heard from a secular non-profit organization that one of their clients had been part of an Emmaus Way team and that it had been hugely helpful to her. Some of the past Emmaus Way team members still keep in touch and many of them comment on how those teams helped them through a really hard time in their lives. If you are sensing a call to deeply impact the life of someone in unstable circumstances, we are always looking for volunteers for this important ministry.

Seniors Programing

We run a monthly seniors program that has entertainment and guest speakers as well as more regular seniors craft and chat. These programs encourage seniors to get out and socialize, lead healthy lives, and access services and supports which allow them to stay in their own homes longer.



Kids Lead

Kids Lead has been going on for 6 years now, following various formats. We are currently running it as a week long summer camp. We visit various non-profit organizations and learn about what goes into making a city function, where the gaps in service are, what issues there are in our city and how they are being addressed. This year we heard from/visited 7 non-profits, had visits from a city counsellor, a community police officer, and volunteered for Inner City Youth at their outdoor picnic.

Partners

We have several partners in the work that we do, and we try to work with and coordinate with as many other churches and non-profit groups as possible.

Here is a list of a few:

Waterloo Village

Saint John Inner City Youth Ministry

City of Saint John

Community Police

Horizon Health

Fresh Start

Lifedirt

Pregnancy Resource Centre



Pictured here:

On the left - We received some funding from the City of Saint John to hire an artist to come to drop-in. Fabiola Martinez came for 6 weeks and showed people how to create various pieces of art work - many of which were given out as Christmas presents to family and loved ones.

On the right - The Saint John Police Force organizes a holiday in a box campaign every year. This year we received about 100 boxes to give out to people (and yes, we fit them all in our little van). For many this was the only Christmas gift they received.

A Learning Continuum:

We know that there is a lot that we don't know. We try to keep informed on Municipal, Provincial, and Federal solutions and policies so that we can be better at what we do. In November 2023, Jasmine went to the National Conference on Ending Homelessness in Halifax. Pictured bellow is the main gathering room with close to 1600 people in attendance. Though this was a secular event, each morning there was an indigenous prayer time and many attendees commented on how moving those moments were.



2023/24 Revenues and Expenses

| Money In | |
|---|------------------|
| Money in account at the beginning of the year | \$66,587 |
| Regular Monthly Donors | \$10,040 |
| Stone Church | \$9,755 |
| Diocese of Fredericton | \$9,500 |
| One time donations | \$26,752 |
| Grants and Foundations | \$25,059 |
| Total income | \$147,692 |

| Money Out | |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Payroll | \$71,183 |
| Employer Expenses | \$15,206 |
| Drop-in and Foodie Friday | \$6,911 |
| Children and Youth Programs | \$6,167 |
| Staff training and materials | \$1,244 |
| Help to Individuals in need | \$1,666 |
| Newcomer Ministries | \$2,428 |
| Facility Costs | \$10,000 |
| Total expenses | \$114,805 |

| Money Left Over | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Income minus expenses | \$32,887 |

Ways to Give/Support/Pray

Please pray for us - daily, if you can! Since April 2024 there are 205 new homeless people on our streets and all of us in this line of work are feeling the pressures. Please pray that our space would be free from violence, harassment and overdoses. Please pray for Terence, Jasmine, Miriam, Jenifer, Penni, and Clare - that we would find new joy, new strength, and new encouragement every morning. Please pray for us to continue to have the resources to meet all our needs and to be able to best serve the community. Please pray for imagination so that we would create the kinds of services and programs that make real and lasting change. And most of all, please pray for the people we serve, that they would know the love God has for them.

How to Contact us:

Pennies and Sparrows

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We largely rely on donations to make our work possible. With the increase in need that we are seeing in our community we are spending more on staff and services and can use your help!

Tax receiptable donations can be made to the Anglican Diocese of Fredericton with a note that funds are to go to Pennies and Sparrows. This can be done in several ways:

Online through Canada Helps (using the drop down tab on the page to select Pennies and Sparrows)
<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/13778>.

By cheque sent to the Diocese of Fredericton with Pennies and Sparrows in the memo line - 168 Church Street Fredericton, NB E3B 4C9. Or by cheque sent to Stone Church again with Pennies and Sparrows in the memo line - 87 Carleton Street Saint John NB E2L 2Z2.

By e-transfer to Stone Church with a note that the funds are to go to Pennies and Sparrows - stjstone@nb.aibn.com.