

“Advent comes each year and quietly asks me to pause, to remember that we do not bring the kingdom of God to the world through our own effort or on our own timeline. We wait for one outside of us and outside of time. We wait for our coming king.”

Tish Harrison Warren.



PROGRAM UPDATES



STONE CHURCH PARTNERSHIPS



PRAYER REQUESTS

PENNIES & SPARROWS



Advent Greetings!

In this season of Advent, as we anticipate the celebration of the birth of Jesus, we struggle with conflicting emotions: On the one hand, we mourn the suffering and desperation in our midst. The sheer numbers that we see at our drop-in program (the Stone Cafe) is an indication of the worsening homelessness crisis in our city. On the other hand, we are

thankful for the signs of God’s loving presence among us. We see Jesus showing up in the stories of those who have made it into detox programs, or who have gained the confidence to apply for jobs, or who are just finding the strength to keep going.

The church calendar is now full every week and we are so glad to see the space buzzing with activity each day. It’s a wonderful credit to our outstanding staff and volunteers, without whom our ministry would simply be impossible. As you will see in this newsletter, there’s a lot going on. Please remember that your support (whether through financial giving, volunteering or prayer) is enabling all of this to happen. Thank you!

We hope that no matter what this season brings that we will find the time and the space to notice all that God is doing and rejoice.

Terence and
Jasmine Chandra

Program Updates

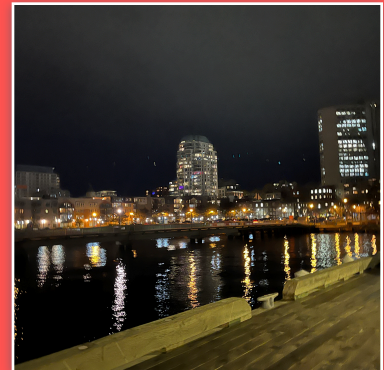
The Waterloo Village area of Saint John is a neighbourhood with a lot of needs. The area has a mixture of low-rent units and assisted housing. It is also an area with a large number of service providers who do amazing work feeding, housing, and providing for the needs of those who live in the area. Unfortunately, however, homelessness is still a terrible reality for many— a fact made obvious by the small “tent village” on Waterloo street.

Salvation Army takes a break from their in house activities to raise funds for their work through their kettle campaign. This means that Stone Church is one of the only places where people can come inside. To accommodate the increased need during the months of November and December we have expanded our drop-in hours from 9 to 15 hours a week. In fact, we often let people come into the church early, especially if they are cold or just need a place to rest.

These extra hours require extra volunteers and we are so very grateful for all those who have stepped up to help out. Our staff have also been working quite hard offering referrals and resources where available. Unfortunately the extra hours and the colder weather also mean that we see increased needs. To meet some of these needs, we offer free haircuts, nursing care, grief support, clothing, and social activities during drop-in. We also received a grant from the city of Saint John to offer a 6 week art program run by Fabiola Martinez (pictured here with some participants).



Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness Conference



In November Jasmine went to the CAEH national conference hosted in Halifax. The three day conference had daily workshops and plenaries that looked at the challenges as well as the hopeful work being done around homelessness.

Program Updates - Continued

We currently have three Emmaus Way teams running with another one on the way. These teams continue to support individuals and families with a variety of needs - anything from help settling in when arriving to Canada from another country, to new parents, to those struggling with health issues, or anyone who just needs some extra support to get them through an unstable time.

The English languages classes have been going well and, at times, there have been over a dozen students in one class. Miriam Westin, who teaches beginner English has been studying and working extra hours to get her TESL certificate. She is now fully certified. Congratulations, Miriam! Clare Andrews has been busy with her intermediate English class and has created a special after school program for kids learning English. These classes are lot of fun - and include snacks!

Our Seniors programs, Foodie Friday, Youth group, board and committee work, and connecting in the community are ongoing and always evolving and growing. We thank God for the many opportunities to be fruitful in the Saint John area.

Partnerships

We deeply value our partnership with the Waterloo Village Neighbourhood Association. Their staff - Penni and Jennifer - have been helping with our Drop-ins, seniors events, and Foodie Friday program. As we have increased our hours, this partnership has been invaluable.

We are thankful that Stone Church offers us such an open and welcoming space. The partnership Pennies and Sparrows has with Stone Church has enabled ministry to grow. There is a lot of overlap between the two and there are times when we wonder where Pennies and Sparrows ends and Stone Church begins. But, thanks to the flexibility of the congregation and leadership, we are able to make this work to the benefit of the greater community. This is why we are celebrating with Stone Church as the scaffolding comes down for this season and we can finally see all the work that has been accomplished. The workers, masons, and staff from the engineering company have all been very impressed by all the activities run by Pennies and Sparrows.



Prayer requests

- Please pray for all those who are struggling with addictions, mental health issues and poverty. May they find new hope each day. We pray especially for housing solutions that provide the care and support of a home. Please pray for all the service providers that are extra busy in this season as they try to meet for the needs of those in our community. Please pray for the health and strength of us and the staff we work with. It can be discouraging to not be able to help people the way we would like to. May we be reminded often of the higher purpose of our work.

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

Financial details such as budget and expenditure information is available upon request.



Pictured here: some of the kids from Youth Connection - our weekly Youth group that we run with Inner City Youth Ministry.



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We are in need of daily prayer and have several volunteer opportunities, feel free to reach out for more information.