
PENNIES & SPARROWS

A Newsletter By Terence and Jasmine Chandra



IN the first moments after the tomb was found to be empty, and before Jesus had appeared alive, there was a flurry of activity and general confusion. In the account from the Gospel of John, two of the disciples run to the tomb, Mary weeps. There is hesitancy and rash action, belief and distress. Unspoken questions hang in the air - “What happened to his body?” “What do we do now? “

At Easter we quite rightly focus on the resurrection, the celebration of Jesus being truly alive, and consequently, the celebration his victory over sin and death. But these moments before the resurrection had been confirmed, also have a significant place. It’s these moments that make the whole account so grounded, so human.

We are in life faced with both such terrible and such wonderful situations that we can’t act or think our way out of them. We will fumble about, run then hesitate, weep and rejoice, we’ll question and doubt and believe. And it all is part of the story, maybe even part of the plan. *(Continues on p2)*

“for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.” John 20:9



Our current Programs:

(Continued from page 1) It has happened a couple of times at our Foodie Friday program that the food has not cooked quickly enough. While all the participants are busy preparing and setting up for the meal, there is decisive action and intentional discussion - “pass the onions, are you done with that cutting board? Is my apron on straight?” - but once the food has been prepped, and the table set, then the conversation shifts. We start to ask deeper, more personal questions, we start more creative, less intentional actions.



A few weeks ago while the chicken was having trouble getting up to its needed internal temperature, people started chatting, a guitar was brought out and some began to sing and what may have started out as a group of people cooking together became a community. In our work, it's the moments between programs and events that we strive to be attentive to.

The Drop-in program may keep people warm and give them a place to go during the day, but the deeper value is in the contacts and connections that happen naturally between participants, volunteers, and staff. It's when through a conversation someone reaches out for help with the mental health issues they've been facing, or when we are able to bring in a slice of cake and celebrate a birthday, or when someone is connected to a potential job.

Some of these moments are hard to measure, but when we look at them, we see that they happened because God is at work and like the empty tomb, the folded linen, they tell us that Jesus is very much alive.

Youth Connection: weekly youth program with a meal

Drop-in: 3 times a week open to everyone in the community

Seniors Step-it-Up: once a month seniors event and twice a month craft and chat.

The Emmaus Way: Teams of support for individuals and families in unstable circumstances - currently have 4 teams on the go.

ESL Language Classes - Beginner and Intermediate English Language Classes.

ESL Kids: After School Program to teach kids English

Foodie Fridays: A weekly cooking program where people cook together and invite friends over to share the meal.





Candles were lit on Tuesday of Holy Week by members of our drop-in program in memory of those who died in the recent encampment fire.

Our community has been rocked this week by the death of 2 people from a nearby encampment fire. We knew them both quite well from our drop-in program. Homelessness continues to be a pressing need in our community, as in many communities across Canada. The agencies on the ground are struggling to offer what services we can and we are leaning more on each other as we deal with increased need.

The emergency shelter in the city has expanded to be open 24 hours a day and they plan on soon having on-site health and addictions services available on site. Our drop-in numbers have slowed down a bit, but after an intense winter, we welcome this as we are able to have more meaningful conversations with those who come in. It's often through those conversations that we can direct people to other help and services.

We have also been welcoming other partners and organizations to come during our Drop-in hours. Currently we have a hair dresser offering free haircuts twice a month, we have a community police officer coming once or twice a week to talk to people and give advice, we have a few volunteers making sandwiches, or cooking meals, we have a Horizon Health employee coming once a week to talk about grief and loss, we have someone offering a music game once a week, and we have a team from Fresh Start who comes to meet with people they are trying to get into housing. We are very thankful for our partnership with the Waterloo Village Neighbourhood Association which is helping to staff our drop-in, senior program, and other supporting services.

There are no easy solutions when it comes to homelessness. We see sparks of hope in certain individuals or certain efforts or programs, but we still have a long way to go. We need all levels of government as well as agencies and those experiencing homelessness to work together on lasting and effective solutions.



“The snacks, companionship, and music make it feel like a birthday party!” *Senior from the Seniors Step It Up Program*

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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 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.