



THE PULSE

OPEN ARMS MISSION'S NEWSLETTER JULY - AUGUST 2020

IN THE MIDST OF CRISIS

The last few months have been filled with many challenges. We have been challenged by the extra safety concerns, causing us to put in extra protocols like social distancing, screening questionnaires, increased cleaning and PPE.

But it has also challenged us in how to connect with people. As our drop in centre had to temporarily close, we were faced with the reality that it was more difficult to connect with people than when our daily drop in centre was open and you could easily sit down with someone over a cup of coffee.

We have had to be more intentional in relationship and connect in different ways than we were used to. One way we did this is by having our summer student, Rebecca, engage people in conversation in the driveway as they came to use our food bank services. She asked them questions about their food security and how we can serve them better and improve our services. She also asked them how we could pray with them. The responses were very honest and vulnerable as they shared their struggles and how Open Arms Mission has been there for them in those struggles.

While we have been able to serve food and hygiene products out of the window and speak with people on the driveway this summer, we know that the weather is changing and we want to welcome people inside our building once again. We have begun to reorganize the Fellowship Hall at the Mission Centre to provide a space to have people safely come inside, choose the food they need and also have an opportunity to speak with someone who cares.

Even in the midst of crisis, we are striving to be His presence in this broken world.

-Marty Misener, Executive Director

BC/SC (BEFORE COVID, SINCE COVID)

This new era of life, where we all mark time with statements such as "Before COVID" and "Since COVID," have been very interesting. During this "Since COVID" time, I have been so happy to reconnect with some people as we talk together on the driveway. I ask them how they are doing, making sure they are okay, and joke around with them, bringing levity to this challenging time. I've been able to pray with people as they share and fill me in on how they have been impacted by COVID and life situations.

The happiest I have been "Since COVID" was when one of our young adult clients, "Sammy" came for food when I was helping out in the food room. I have been praying for him way "Before COVID" as he has struggled to get free from drug addiction and I'm always concerned that he will overdose without someone nearby to help him. I cannot tell you the relief and joy I felt as I greeted him by name and told him how much I've prayed and thought of him these past months. Pray for "Sammy" that he will find New Life and freedom in Jesus. We have had sincere and deep conversations on faith and life change and I would to have that opportunity again with him soon.

-Carol Hand,
Mission Centre
Chaplain



WORDS OF COMFORT

Over the last few months, we distributed 263 Bibles, 184 "Words of Comfort" booklets (written to give comfort from God's Word during COVID), and 175 "Inspire Justice" devotionals.

Sarah, a single mom with four children who came to our food bank and received bags of food, a Bible and devotional, couldn't say enough about how receiving the Bible impacted her and her children's lives. She said she loved how the special highlighting in the Bible allows her to see God's love specifically to those who are suffering. She also loves the devotional. She said the way the devotionals are written encompasses God's character in such a beautiful way.

Sarah said, "It is hard to understand and to put into words the unconditional love of the Lord but this devotional has been an amazing tool to learn more about God." Her four kids also received the Bible and the devotional books. They too love reading and learning from the books.

We received these materials from the Canadian Bible Society. It is a great partnership which enabled us to still ensure a gospel focus and message of hope through Jesus Christ in this time.



FRESH FOOD HUB

Through Agriculture Canada's Local Food Infrastructure Fund and Farm Credit Canada, we have received significant investments for our Fresh Food Hub at our Ministry Campus on Forks Road.



As part of the Government of Canada's Food Policy, which is Canada's roadmap for a healthier and more sustainable food system in Canada, the Minister has established the Local Food Infrastructure Fund. Through this fund, we received \$12,990 toward building a walk in freezer and strengthening food systems to facilitate access to safe and nutritious food, for at-risk populations.

We also received \$17,000 from Farm Credit Canada toward building a sorting and processing room to better connect farmers, food manufacturers and grocery stores to people in need in our community. Sophie Perreault, Farm Credit Canada executive vice-president and chief operating officer said, "We are honoured to support the projects that help keep these communities as vibrant hubs for rural Canadians."

We have been making significant progress towards building the needed infrastructure today to ensure no one in our community goes hungry tomorrow.

To donate to this project or find out more about the Fresh Food Hub go to www.trellis.org/fresh-food-hub

We will be having a Christmas "banquet" this year!

Save the date:

**Friday,
November 27**

More details to come about our safe, decentralized banquet for 2020

MISSION CENTRE

22 FIFTH STREET, WELLAND
905-788-3800

Food bank:

Tuesday to Friday 9:00am to 4:00pm Friday 9:00am to 12:00pm

Personal Care bank:

Tuesday and Thursday 9:00am to 4:00pm

Office/donation drop off:

Monday to Friday 9:00am to 4:00pm



MINISTRY CAMPUS

933 FORKS ROAD WEST, WAINFLEET
905-732-8260

Furniture sales by appointment:

Tuesday to Friday 10:00am to 4:00pm Friday 9:00am to 1:00pm

Please call for donation pick up or to make an appointment.

Donation drop off:

Tuesday to Friday 10:00am to 4:00pm

www.openarmsmissionwelland.com