



Stonegate Community Ecumenical Ministry

2015 Annual Report

For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2015

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Stonegate Ministry

Vision

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

Mission

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.

Core Values

Stonegate Ministry is committed to:

The wellbeing of the individual: We will endeavor at all times to treat each person with kindness and respect while giving special attention to those who find themselves marginalized. To the best of our ability we will provide aid to ensure the basics to those in need: safety, food, shelter, economic, social, spiritual and emotional while engaging in skill-building in order to develop people.

Building healthy community: We will actively work to reduce isolation and loneliness and provide opportunities to build healthy relationships.

Christian witness: We will endeavor at all times to be a visible and articulate Christian witness to those around us.

Stewardship: We are committed to effective use of our resources at every level of the organization while striving for excellence. We consider the resources we are given to be God's gifts of time, money and talent.

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Chairman's Report

While the last few years have been challenging to the Ministry after having to vacate our facility in the Stonegate Plaza, 2015 has been a time to rebuild and refocus our ministry.

Our new store on the Lake Shore, Great Finds, completed its first full year and has shown increasing activity every month. Word has been spreading that Great Finds is where one can not only get quality affordable family clothing, but where you can find caring people whose primary interest is not 'making a sale' but to help individuals who are struggling or are in distress, or who care enough to listen to their story. The store is where many contacts are made between our dedicated volunteer staff and hurting people. Many are helped by finding suitable clothing for their family or being introduced to a program that would be appropriate or be directed to other agencies or local churches where they can find specific support.

On a recent visit for an afternoon meeting, I walked into what is not an atypical scene in the back office of the store. Jeannie, our dedicated Store Manager was scurrying to find something to augment the can of soup that was already being consumed by a young woman who had not had anything to eat all day and could not hold back the tears; maybe tears of gratefulness, distress, or both. Stories like this illustrate why the Ministry exists and why our staff and volunteers faithfully and joyfully serve.

Stonegate Ministry could not operate without the dedicated volunteers in the store, in programming and in the practical assistance of maintenance and building. As I have talked to and thanked our dedicated volunteers the almost universal response has been how much they enjoy what they do – an example of serving the Lord with joy. In Galatians 5:22, St. Paul writes what could also be used to describe our many volunteers “ ***But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.***”

After a drought when our programming was curtailed by the lack of our own facility and the absence of a Ministry Coordinator, in July we welcomed Emily Slotegraaf to run programs in both the Stonegate and Lake Shore communities. Emily is a graduate of Tyndale and is a certified Professional Counsellor and has a deep desire to help those in need and show Christ's love to everyone she serves. She is running a limited number of programs in the Stonegate Community using space provided by Christ Church St. James and the Health Center. Emily has also established relationships with our member churches and has been well received by the churches in Mimico with whom we will be working.

We are also indebted to the many individuals who have contributed financially to keep the ministry vital and growing. In addition to a growing number of individuals, our member churches and their corporate bodies have been most faithful and generous. We also

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appreciate continuing support from Rotary and Kiwanis and we are pleased that we will again be partnering with St. Vincent de Paul in their store voucher program.

2016 will bring new challenges but the ministry has been led to a very needy area and with the support of our entire constituency we will endeavor to bring relief and care and make a positive difference in the lives of all whom we will be privileged to serve.

Graeme Quigley,
Chair

Treasurer's Report

It was an excellent year for the Ministry with a surplus of \$19,435. This compares with a deficit of \$8376 in 2014. While contributions from partner and national churches were down by \$5,000 versus 2014, this was more than offset by an additional \$10,000 in fund-raising realized in 2015. Store revenues were \$65,000 in 2015 versus \$20,000 in 2014, when the Outreach store was closed for most of the year. Ministry Program expenses were \$18,000 higher than in 2014, mainly due to the hiring of a Program Coordinator in mid-year, as well as other staff salary costs.

The Ministry's cash position remains strong, with \$111,000 in the chequing account along with \$40,000 in the operating reserve.

The Ministry has budgeted a loss of \$5000 for 2016. Income is budgeted at \$ 130,000 and expenses are budgeted at \$135,000.

Treasurer's Objectives for 2016:

- 1) Use on-line software to calculate payroll.
- 2) Set-up accounts payable and work toward having the software generate the cheques

Pete Pynenburg,
Treasurer

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Community Liaison Committee Report

2015 was another challenging year for the Community Liaison Committee.

Speaking on behalf of Stonegate community residents, we continued in our efforts to ensure that the community's point of view and concerns about the redevelopment were emphatically presented.

Following through on our 2014 eight page Community Impact Report, and our Community Survey results, we had further meetings with City planners and our local Councillor, Justin DiCiano. Along with public meetings, these meetings were part of a concerted campaign to highlight for the decision-makers the ongoing need for community space for the work of our Ministry, and retail space in general, in providing services to disadvantaged members of our community.

On February 10, at St Mark's, we participated in a public meeting organized by the Stonegate Community Health Centre and Vandyk. During the "open mic", we presented the results of the survey which expressed that the residents were highly concerned about affordable food, community services and affordable family clothing.

On February 25, again at St Mark's, the Planning Department held a public meeting. We aligned ourselves with various groups protesting about the height of the proposed condominiums. Concerns about traffic and other issues were unanswered. Nor was there an answer to the question: "Is it possible that the Plan would be approved without a grocery store tenant and other retail?" The Plan claims that previous services would be retained. We provided a listing of services that would be lost.

We have received help and direction from two people with legal expertise in dealing with developers and City planners. As reported last year, Ted Smith; a good friend of the SCM, joined our committee. In February this year, we sought the advice of a community minded lawyer; Mary Flynn-Guglietti, who, after reviewing our Impact Report adopted our cause and had her law firm approve her donating 30 pro bona hours to work on our behalf. With Mary's help, we adopted a strategy of pressing our case for inclusion under Section 37 of City Planning Redevelopment Provisions. The approach was that the City would be awarded space at a preferred rate and the City would then lease it to an approved social agency, hopefully Stonegate Ministry. We received a good reception from City planners who were in technical agreement with our approach and who forwarded our proposal to our Councillor Justin DiCiano. Subsequently, Mary Flynn-Guglietti and our committee had a conference call meeting with Justin DiCiano who supported our plan and agreed to talk to Vandyk on our behalf.

However, on February 23, 2016, Councillor DiCiano presented a motion to Regional Council for approval of the Vandyk plan, and in spite of his election platform, his motion had no mention of the Ministry and no provision for the Ministry's future in the Stonegate community.

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Mary Flynn-Guglietti proposed an amendment which was opposed by Vandyk and DiCiano's motion was passed. As a result, the Ministry's ability to provide the programs and community services will be severely limited in the future.

We are partnering with the Stonegate Health Centre in all these matters of mutual interest. We expect this partnership to become even more important in the future as we share programs and space resources.

Eculinks, the ecumenical group representing all the churches in our area, is also actively supporting us in our endeavors.

Submitted by Peter Patterson, Gordon Glandfield, Graeme Quigley and John Gilmour
Stonegate Ministry Community Liaison Committee

Stonegate Ministry Property Report

By this time last year our store, Great Finds, had been open for about four months. Some very harsh winter weather was affecting the sales somewhat. However, the enthusiasm of finally having a place to call our own was not dampened. We realized that area in which the store was located had many similarities to the Stonegate area which we faithfully served for many years.

The store requires many hands to make it successful and we are blessed with about 30 volunteers who work under the guidance of our store manager Jeannie Martinez. Even though we were without a place for a long period of time, 24 of those volunteers came back to serve the Ministry and the community. We are so blessed to have those faithful workers and are especially grateful to Jeannie for pulling it all together. Carol-Anne Foty, in addition to office manager duties, also finds time to help sort and price specialty items in the store.

One of the biggest challenges we have for the Ministry is not having adequate space to not only run our programs but also having adequate space for storage and displays for the store. In the first quarter of 2016 a room will be created at the bottom of the stairs in the store basement, so that our program developer and staff have some privacy to interview and counsel. The space will be approximately 10 feet by 12 feet. This space will not be suitable for many programs that the Ministry will run. Christ Church St. James has thankfully provided space to facilitate our other programs. It has become more and more evident that we will likely not be getting back into the new Van Dyke development.

In the new year a concerted effort will have to be made to find either larger premises that accommodate all our needs, or at the very least an additional location. In the meantime, we will trust in God knowing He will allow us to keep serving the community that we know needs our help.

Gord Glandfield, **Facilities Committee**

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Human Resources Report

The year 2015 was a year of rebirth for our staff. Firstly, the opening of Great Finds proved to be an overwhelming success. The Lakeshore location was an excellent choice. By year's end our sales volume was similar to the level at the Stonegate Plaza location. Thanks to Jeannie for her imagination and tenacity.

Carol-Anne kept all communication lines open during the year. She brought issues to the attention of the Board and ensured that issues were addressed in a timely manner. We were especially pleased with Carol-Anne's work in the launching of the newsletters. She not only ensured that all designated people were copied on the newsletter, she also ensured that all donations stemming from this were gratefully acknowledged.

Stonegate Ministry was able to resume program work during 2015 as a result of the employment of Emily Slotegraaf in June 2015. As a result of her energy and enthusiasm we were able to launch the following programs:

- English Conversational Circle
- CAP Budgeting Program
- Tuesday Women's Group
- God, Coffee & Me

The Human Resources Committee would like to extend its appreciation to all staff for their contribution throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted, Helen Skippon, Horace Knight
Co-Chairs, Human Resources Committee

Stonegate Ministry (SM) Coordinator Report

It was with excitement that I joined the SM team in July 2015. I have come to be impressed by the role that SM has in the neighborhood. What makes me most excited about serving here is the partnerships that are dedicated to loving and showing Christ to each individual with whom we interact.

My role has been to run programs in the community and to network SM specifically in the Mimico area. Networking is a new skill that I have learned with SM. However, I do believe that the year that Great Finds has been in the Mimico area has established SM's reputation and foundation in the local community and churches. SM has been enthusiastically embraced by the Mimico area and is now an official part of the Mimico pastor's group, the interfaith community, and the Mimico-Lakeshore Community Network. We have participated in combined "Blue Christmas" and Lenten services with the local churches. I have thoroughly enjoyed running programs and getting to know residents in a deeper way. Here are the programs we

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have run in the last year and a highlight from each one:

English Conversational Circle: We have been running an English Conversational Circle for those who want to practice their English skills, since the end of 2015. There were 5 regular attendees each from different countries. A highlight was when one of the attendees experienced the birth of her first grandchild and wanted to celebrate with the group in her tradition. It was clear that this group was not just a place to learn English, but had become her community away from home.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP): In partnership with Christ Church St. James (CCSJ), SM attended budgeting training through CAP and used their curriculum to run a budgeting class for 5 participants. We were able to build a solid relationship with one of the women in the neighborhood who also attends the Food Bank. She has repeatedly expressed her gratitude for SM and CCSJ and continues to share her life with us. Another of one of the attendees emotionally shared her financial struggles with debt and at the end of the program declared that she now has a plan to be debt-free in three months.

Tuesday's Women's Group: SM has a women's community group that meets every Tuesday. We enjoy a meal together which helps to build relationships. Different speakers are invited with favorites being a firefighter teaching on fire safety and a life coach teaching on how to dream. A highlight for me has been watching the women feel safe to open up about their stories and current struggles. SM has been a listening ear and support for those navigating abuse, loss and depression.

Christian Counselling: At SM we are currently creating a downstairs space for an office which will also be used for counselling. Currently there are two people who have accessed this recent program. It is an honour to be able to journey with people in the midst of their struggles and pain.

Mimico Bible Study: Currently SM is running a Bible study in a local coffee shop with as many as 7 attendees. This coffee shop is frequented by hurting neighbors and one volunteer even witnessed a drug deal. We believe this is a place that we need to be in. This Bible study has become a place of community and one attendee stated that "it is her place of rest." A highlight is watching the attendees bring their questions and life's struggles to the table to share and wrestle through.

SM has many volunteers who help make the organization what it is. I am ever grateful for the amazing volunteers I have in my programs. They have encouraged, supported, and inspired the above programs. I would also like to thank the dedication and the wisdom of the Board – SM is what it is because of their dedication and determination to serve the neighborhood.

I am excited to see what 2016 brings.

Emily Slotegraaf
Ministry Coordinator

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Stonegate Ministry Programs Continued in 2015:

Prayer for You Ministry Report

The Prayer for You team was active throughout 2015, meeting twice a month at Great Finds to provide confidential prayer with any customer or volunteer who requested this offer, except July and August. "Impact Stonegate" monthly meetings of the volunteer prayer team members took place at Christ Church St. James for fellowship among the team and to allow us to pray together for Stonegate Ministry needs and special prayer requests from our clients and store staff and volunteers. We maintained e-mail and telephone contact between meetings for appropriate updates. We are very thankful to the Lord for the way He has brought us together as spiritual sisters, from different denominations, to serve Him in the work He gives us to do at Stonegate Ministry.

Submitted by Carol-Anne Foty
Prayer for You Team Member

Summer Sizzlers Program, 2015: On Victoria Day, May 18th, Stonegate Ministry in collaboration with CCSJ (194 Park Lawn Road parking lot) put on "Celebrate Summer Sizzler" which was an overwhelming success, with over 300 attendees. Live music, crafts, games, balloons & a rented Bouncy Castle and free community BBQ, with KBC youth and leadership volunteers, as well as SM volunteers overseeing sales at the Great Finds booth. "Prayer for You" team members were also present to make private prayer opportunities available and were much appreciated by those taking part.

The Promise Post: A public posting in the store each week of God's promises from the Bible.

Outreach Benevolence: Providing clothing and food gift cards without charge for those Ministry customers in financial distress.

Candy Cane Christmas: Hampers donated through the generosity of community partners, Kiwanis Club of Kingsway Humber in partnership with Staples, were distributed at Christ Church St. James Anglican Church through this SM program to needy families at Christmas.

Volunteer Appreciation Acknowledgements: The SM Board provided for another wonderful staff and volunteer appreciation Christmas lunch in December at the Mandarin restaurant on The Queensway. The SM Board members acknowledged how valuable they consider the volunteers and store staff for their hard work and loyalty with Christmas gifts and food cards, and all had a good time together.

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Stonegate Ministry Store Sales Table: Being present within the Stonegate community and relating to the area residents, as well as showing partnership with the Stonegate Community Health Centre (SCHC), was facilitated by the presence of the Great Finds Sales Table at the Summer Sizzler event in 2015, as well as at every Tuesday Farmers' Market held from June through October in 2015. This effort catered to the household and clothing needs of the persons attending these events, while promoting the new home of Great Finds on Lakeshore Blvd. West.

Stonegate Ministry Food Access Programs: Collaborating with other partner churches, the Food Pantry at CCSJ provides needy Stonegate and Lake Shore/Mimico area residents food bank resources 3 times/month and special Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving food gift vouchers as well as turkeys and other special food presents at those celebration times. Partnering with SCHC, the Good Food Box program also helped our food bank clients receive healthy fresh produce, especially in winter.

Stonegate Ministry Store Coupon Program: At particular, seasonal times in the year, special Great Finds shopping coupons were made available (for a limited time) for our customers to save \$3.00 or \$5.00 off their store purchase when they spent \$10.00 or more. This program generates customer loyalty and advertises our location at Great Finds in an appealing way.

Stonegate Ministry Board - 2016

GILMOUR, John
Board Secretary
Community Liaison Committee
Royal York Road United Church

GLANDFIELD, Gordon
Chair, Facilities Committee
Christ Church St. James' Anglican Church

KNIGHT, Horace
Board Chair
Co-Chair, Human Resources
Kingsway-Lambton United Church

PATTERSON, Peter
Vice-Treasurer
Christ Church St. James' Anglican Church

FARKAS, Nancye
Community Member

QUIGLEY, Graeme
Board Vice-Chair
Facilities Committee
Kingsway Baptist Church

SKIPPON, Helen
Co-Chair, Human Resources
All Saints' Kingsway Anglican Church

PYNENBURG, Pete
Treasurer
Community Member

GRANT, Moira
Board Deputy Secretary
Kingsway-Lambton United Church

NIEMY, Sandra
Community Member

