

Providing positive solutions for our clients and our community — thanks to you!

Support from donors like you is vital to helping our most vulnerable neighbours. Every day, up to 300 people turn to the Mission for a meal, to find help getting housed, and to access mental health and addiction services.

"I'd love the community to know that we're working on community solutions. The more helpful our staff is and the more comfortable our clients feel in the neighbourhood, the more likely it is they'll begin to heal and get back on their feet."

That's Matt Johnson, Director of Programs and Services, explaining the important safety and security improvements at 875 Ouellette Avenue.

Matt guides us around the building and through the parking lot, pointing out new changes to the property. He says, "Keeping everyone safe is paramount. That means the people staying here who are in crisis, as well as our neighbours."

Look around and you'll see that outside lighting has been installed. You'll also notice a new fence running along the back of the parking lot, keeping out uninvited vehicles and stopping residents' belongings from blowing into the street. Last summer, picnic tables and cheerful umbrellas started turning the parking lot into a

welcoming courtyard.

Matt says, "We have plans to create more green space and to plant trees. Inside the building, we're loving and compassionate. So, we want the outside of the Mission to reflect that love for the people we serve. And, more than ever, we want to engage positively with our surrounding community."

Matt walks us over to the freshly painted floral mural on an outside wall. He says, "Aren't the colours great? Another community group connected us to the local artist who was thrilled to create this work of art. The mural depicts growth, renewal, and new beginnings; everything we believe our clients are capable of, with support and understanding."

Matt explains the services that Mission clients most depend on, Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program, are just a few blocks away. That means they can get help quickly. As well, the shelter provides 96 beds every night of the year. "If the Mission weren't here, that would be another 96 folks on



the street," he says.

We believe that collaboration between the Mission and the community will bring positive changes for everyone. In the last two years, donors have helped more than 100 people get housed. In the last six months alone, 20 people have graduated from addiction recovery programs and



“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in...”

— MATTHEW 25:35

As we get ready to celebrate Thanksgiving, many of us count our blessings. Autumn is also a good time to remember our neighbours who don't have much, but who are so thankful for your support.

For those in our community living without basic necessities, you help offer a nutritious meal, a comfortable bed, warm clothing, and a kind word. By providing these essentials, you show God's love to everyone who turns to the Mission. And for that, I am so grateful.

As the weather turns colder, more people will be in need of shelter. **If you can make a special Thanksgiving donation, please know that your contribution will help us continue to be a place of hope and practical help for our**



most vulnerable neighbours.

If you are going to donate winter clothing to a local charity, please drop them off here at the Mission. Thanks to you, we give away gently used coats, sweaters, hats, and gloves to our clients. There's never a charge.

If you come across an extra box of cereal or jar of peanut butter in your cupboard, please donate your items to our food bank.

Just recently, I was talking to one of our long-time volunteers. Over the last 20 years, she's seen many changes in Windsor, including the fact that more working people are turning to the Mission. While she's disturbed by this, she's heartened that the Mission is still here to help.

Your generosity is at the heart of everything we do.

With thanks,

Rukshini Ponniah-Goulin
Executive Director

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another 20 received emergency mental health assistance.

Next time you're near the Mission, we hope you'll notice the new and improved changes we're making on the outside. But more importantly, please remember that you are inspiring spiritual healing inside our building and within many grateful hearts.

A big thank you to Parkwood Gospel Temple for donating outdoor seating and umbrellas, to the City of Windsor for providing tables for our courtyard, and to the Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association for supplying paint and other materials to the mural artist. ■

Looking for personalized holiday gifts that help your community?

The Downtown Mission's Chari-Tees program does more than design t-shirts. It offers job training and new opportunities to men and women re-entering the workforce.

You can hear the excitement in Jennie Dewar's voice. "I interviewed for a position at a printing company last week. The Mission has given me a lot of confidence. Thanks to all their encouragement, I'm keen to get into the job market," she says.

Jennie is a graduate of Enterprise, our employment readiness program. As a participant, she upgraded her computer skills, learned how to write an effective resume, and prepared for job interviews. For her on-the-job training, Jennie worked at Chari-Tees, an on-site Mission program.

Chari-Tees raises funds for the Mission's work by designing, making, and selling thousands of personalized items like t-shirts, mugs, blankets, and key chains. Chari-Tees also offers expert



embroidery services.

You can come to the Chari-Tees Outlet to see samples of our merchandise and place your orders for the holidays. Personalized gifts are great for corporations, sports teams and families.

Megan Saxon is Production Lead and ensures the high quality of all items. She says, "We offer competitive prices to our customers and all the money raised goes to feeding the hungry and helping the homeless. At the same time, people who need jobs are learning important skills around printing, inventory, and embroidery."

Jennie says, "After my divorce, I felt really low. I'd been out of the workforce for a long time and I needed to take care of my children. People at the Mission want you to succeed. It's so uplifting. The students help each other and the staff are amazing mentors."

Thank you for supporting our job readiness programs and providing new opportunities to Jennie and all our students. If you'd like more information about ordering Chari-Tees products, please visit our website. ■



Here's the scoop on Casey Kelly

You might have seen Casey Kelly cycling around Windsor with his ice cream cart last summer.

Casey's a popular guy in town, especially with the kids playing soccer and baseball. "They may not know my name, but they call me 'Ice Cream Boy,'" he explains. His hottest-selling item? The classic ice cream sandwich.

"That cart's the best investment I ever made. Well, actually it's my only investment," the 16-year-old says. Now in grade 11, Casey has donated a portion of his sales to the Downtown Mission for the last two summers. His fundraiser, 'Cone for a Cause,' took a lighthearted approach to a serious issue: 'Let's give hunger a brain freeze.'

"I donated the proceeds of one day's work in June, three hundred dollars. I just loaded up the cart, rang the bell, and hit all the soccer games and parks that I could."

Casey believes everyone has something to give to make our community a better place. "If you're really young, you can set up a lemonade stand and give the money to a charity like the Mission. Older kids can run a car wash. And teenagers and adults can give money, even a small amount.



Volunteering is another option. It pays off for everyone."

Thank you to Casey, and to all of our donors and volunteers, for your sweet generosity. ■

