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CITY OF REFUGE

You're Invited to Making Strides for Sanctuary 2018!

**Help us meet our fundraising
goal of \$150,000!**

When: September 22, 2018

Where: Tommy Thompson Park
(a.k.a The Leslie Spit), Toronto

What: You can join us for a 5k
walk/roll/stroll/skip (the most
easygoing option), a 5k run, or
(for the first time ever!) a 10k run

Visit tinyurl.com/sancstrides to
register, join or start a team, or donate
to support someone's run!



MAKING STRIDES FOR SANCTUARY



You're invited to
join Sanctuary on
September 22nd
at Toronto's Tommy
Thompson Park for
our annual fundraising
run/walk/roll!

Sanctuary has been hosting
a fundraising walk or run for 10 years.
We've done everything from Survivor
themed runs to 1960's walks with tie-dyed
t-shirts and bell-bottom jeans! Last year
we called the event "Making Strides for
Sanctuary," and we're sticking with that
moniker this year. It's a good fit, because
the run is a great chance for the Sanctuary
family, and our friends and supporters, to
gather together and support continued,
positive, forward momentum for our
special community where people who are
poor and excluded are particularly valued.

This newsletter highlights some of the
many things that we're hoping to "make
strides" for at this year's fundraising event.
Greg Cook writes about the work that
Sanctuary does, through advocacy, referrals,
and the two rental houses we operate,
to help members of our community find
shelter and, ideally, a place to call home.
Lyf Stolte shares some pictures of

Sanctuary's weekly Art Studio and
offers some reflections on his experience
fostering the gifts and unique voices of
our community members. Mel Ng gives
an update on Sanctuary's efforts to renew
its back yard to make it a beautiful, sacred,
and welcoming community space. And,
in this month's "The View From Here,"
Greg Paul reflects on how the theme of
"making strides" is a good metaphor for
Sanctuary's community life and work:
faithfully, and persistently pushing
towards a better life now and a better
future for our friends who face the
immense challenges of poverty and
marginalization.

We would be honoured if you chose to
help us "Make Strides for Sanctuary"
this year. We'd love for you to join us
by running, walking, or rolling (for folks
who use wheelchairs), but there are also
many other ways to support the event.
You can sponsor someone else's run
through our registration page at
tinyurl.com/sancstrides, make a regular
donation inspired by the run, or promote
the event to your friends, family, church,
colleagues, or community group! If you
promote the event on social media, you
can use our hashtag: #sancstrides.



Greg Paul

The View From Here

*Do you not know?
Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.
He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.
Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.*

[Isaiah 40:28-31, NIV]

I have to say, at last year's 5K Sanctuary run event, I didn't see many youths grow tired and weary, let alone stumble and fall. To me, it seemed like they just bounded along as if gravity didn't apply to them. Some of the kids who participated probably added a kilometer or two by running back and forth or in loops out of sheer exuberance. One of our core community members showed up in a long black priest's cassock and completed the course with religious solemnity.

As for me, I had determined beforehand that if I could actually run something like half the course, I'd be content strolling along the rest of it. I'm unjustifiably proud of the fact that in actuality, I ran about four of the five clicks. I'm sure I hadn't run more than a hundred yards in a decade, and wasn't wearing running shoes, so my dogs were barking and my calf muscles were screaming the next day. It was totally worth it, but this year I'm planning to buy proper footwear, and hoping to "train" (an extravagant word for what I have in mind) enough to be able to stagger along the entire route, without stopping, at something more than a walk. Maybe I'll memorize this passage and recite it to myself as I "run" in September.

Of course, Isaiah's beautiful and powerfully encouraging words are not really about running in a literal sense. This chapter-long poem begins with "Comfort, comfort my people" – a tender word of support and healing for a population that had been battered by events and wrecked by their own brokenness. Oppression, poverty, idolatry, violence: they had suffered it all. The poet continues on to express, at length and in gorgeous language, the creative supremacy and incontestable might of God. In another's mouth, these words might begin to sound threatening, as the voice of power inevitably does in our world; in Isaiah's, it becomes clear that the entirety of God's omnipotence is bent to the redemption and renewal of his bruised and wayward people. Their struggles were not over. They would need strength for the moment, endurance for the long haul, an expansive and vibrant hope on which to fix their eyes. All this is promised, for the powerful arm of the Creator, the Everlasting, sheaths a muscle of inexhaustible love.

So Making Strides For Sanctuary isn't just a 5K fundraising run. It's a metaphor for and an exercise of who we are.

The people of our community have also been battered and broken. We too sometimes wonder, "Is my way hidden from the Lord? My cause disregarded by my God?" (verse 27). We long for the valleys to be raised up, the mountains to be made low, and the rough places to become level (verse 4). We work hard to effect changes in our own lives, in our community, in the systems, processes and attitudes of our culture. We see a little improvement here and there, but not often and not enough; most discouragingly, we sometimes see hard-won advances wiped out. We cry out in lament and complaint; we stagger to our feet, and try again.

Ultimately though, we know that real change – whether it's the healing of our own sinful hearts or the reformation of sinful systems – is in the hands of the One who never grows tired or weary, whose understanding no one can fathom. We have experienced the truth that, when we hope in God, our strength is renewed. We trust him because he is strong, and because he is also tender.

And so, in faith, we run. Will you run with us?

Making Strides for ART

By: Lyf Stolte



*“But I found more about myself,
I’m pretty artistic, man,
I didn’t know that and
it’s just awesome.”*

Quote from a participant in our Fairy Tale workshop in the spring of 2017, courtesy of Blake, Ainsworth and Huang.

When you hear something like the quotation above, you know in your heart that it is worth it. And it is always worth it, whether we hear those things or not. Because even though we don’t always hear that, it’s there; it may just be underneath the surface, or it may be buried way deep down. The more we provide our community with the opportunity and the space to engage in creative activities, the more opportunity they have to discover how truly wonderful they were created to be. We believe that everyone was created in the image of the Creator. If that is true, then we are all creative beings and we need the space to be creative - whether that is through pencil, paintbrush, math, English, paper, glitter, C++, music, Lego, theatre, storytelling, or any one of the myriad ways we choose to express ourselves.



When our friends see the deeper truth about who they are, they rise up. They become more confident. It’s not a panacea, it’s not a silver bullet. It is a truth. It is beautiful. And out of that truth and beauty, they have the chance to be celebrated.

Celebrate with me now as you look at some of our friends creating (and some of their creations!).



Making Strides for Homes

By: Greg Cook



One of Sanctuary's rental homes.



I love my home. I think it is great that I have a quiet space where I can leisurely drink some coffee each morning. A warm space where I can have intimate conversations with my family and periodically invite close friends over for a meal. A place where I can lock the door if I need to and know that it's OK to just be myself.

Many people who are part of our community at Sanctuary don't have a house or apartment. They don't have four walls and a locked door to make them feel safe and at home each evening. Because rental rates keep going up, and incomes are stagnating, even basic housing is out of reach for more and more people in our community and in our city. Not having a home, even for a short time, is a crisis for anyone. It means stress, lack of stability, and health complications. In 2017 the City of Toronto tracked homeless deaths for the first time and found that 100 people died without housing in 2017, and that over half of those people were under 48 years old.



The front porch.

The housing crisis in our city has also caused a shelter crisis. Toronto shelters, especially those for women, are over capacity every night.

At Sanctuary, we work hard to ensure that each person has a house. We operate two houses in East York that offer a home for eight people in our community. Our outreach team and other staff walk alongside and advocate for people in our community who are trying to secure housing that they can afford. Unfortunately this is more difficult each year as rent rates escalate. We also regularly communicate with the municipal, provincial and federal governments about the need for policy changes to be made so that everyone can afford decent housing. This past winter we worked with other agencies and concerned citizens to push the city government to open 700 extra shelter spaces so that people could sleep inside and out of the cold. We continue to insist that these spaces stay open and that they are more dignified. Ultimately we want everyone in our community and in our city to have a house. Please take these strides with us as we work together so that each person is able to have a home they love.



Making Strides for Beauty

By: Melodie Ng

As anyone living or working in Toronto's downtown core knows, green spaces are precious in a concrete jungle. The streets around Sanctuary in particular are rapidly getting built up! We're blessed with a plot of green space at the back of our building. For several years now, we have had a seasonal initiative known as the "Garden Dreamers." A changing roster of staff have dreamed and engaged our community with the possibilities of seed, soil, and growth each spring and throughout the summer. Planters have been built, the yard has been raked and cleaned, and tulips and crocuses planted in year 1 continue to pop back up tenaciously after each winter.

Our little backyard sits beside George Hislop Park, a city park that will soon be undergoing major revitalization. It's time for our Garden Dream to grow even bigger! Our community has long desired to have a place of solace and remembrance, a place to honour and remember many lost friends from over the years. We would love for our little backyard to provide an experience of beauty, an oasis for our community, and an opportunity for welcome and positive interaction with our neighbours (the number of which has increased exponentially, with all the condos built in the last few years). We hope our backyard can become a space to rest and absorb the curative power of nature, a much-needed medicine for those living in the gritty city. We dream that our garden can be a gathering place for creativity, friendship and renewal.

So this year our Garden Dreamers are dreaming again... and dreaming big. We hope to move forward with some major redesign of the space, and consult with our community along the way to ensure the garden reflects what we value together. We will definitely need special financial support for this endeavor! If you would like to help us make strides for beauty, please get in touch. Here's to getting our hands dirty in the soil and reaching for ever more beauty to nourish and sustain us!



Some images from Sanctuary's back yard.



Some of our "Garden Dreamers" checking out local urban gardens for inspiration.

Financial Update



We didn't include an update from 2017 in our earlier newsletter this year. Sorry about missing that opportunity! We are happy to correct that oversight now and let you know that 2017 was a solid year for us financially. Our donations in November and December were very strong, bringing us just slightly over the break-even point. In a constantly unpredictable economy, we are grateful for the generosity that we experience from so many friends like you. Thank you!

And we are further pleased to report that 2018 is off to a good start. Through this first part of the year, our donations are slightly ahead of this point last year - an encouraging place to find ourselves. But these slightly-better-than-needed results are helpful as they keep us from resting on our laurels! Instead we remain continually aware of our dependence on our Creator for provision through many individuals, churches, foundations, and companies who stand alongside our community here at Sanctuary. Thank you for the valuable part you play in our life together!

Board Members

Alison Marthinsen

Merv Mercer

Grace Cheng

Bruce Gooding

Janice Towndrow

Cindy Quinton

Joanna Moon

Ways to Help

Pray, pray, pray!

Donate:

By credit card: donate.sanctuarytoronto.ca/

Monthly by electronic funds transfer use the form at www.sanctuarytoronto.ca/forms/PAGform.pdf

By cheque or money order payable to Sanctuary Ministries of Toronto
Mail to 25 Charles Street East, Toronto, ON M4Y 1R9

For US Donors, by cheque or money order payable to First Church of the Nazarene
Mail to Sanctuary c/o Radical Mission, 150 Richview Road, Clarksville, TN 37043
Attn: Leighanne Guthrie

Tax receipts will be issued at year end. Funds given in excess of an approved or discontinued program will be applied at the discretion of the Board.

Charitable #89037 9340 RR 0001

Donate A Car Canada! Sanctuary can benefit from your donation of any kind of vehicle (cars, trucks, vans, SUVs, motorcycles, boats, RVs) to be recycled in an environmentally friendly manner! Not only that, but also, if you have a newer or estate vehicle that you would like to donate, they have selling agents to assist in maximizing your donation. Simply go to www.donatecar.ca or call them at 1-877-250-4904.

Other Ideas: **Raise awareness** by showing this newsletter to your friends and family.

Commemorate special people and occasions by donating to Sanctuary 'in honour of...'

Sign-up to receive newsletters and invitations via email by contacting info@sanctuarytoronto.ca

Invite Sanctuary to speak at your church, school or group meeting.

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[SANCTUARY]

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