



May 2010

Inside this Issue

- 1 Summer Plans
- 1 Summer Program Coordinator
- 1 Pastoral Care Teams
- 2 Community Ministries- Best Kept Secret
- 3 Touched by the Holy Juanita MacKinnon-Smith
- 4 Upcoming Events
- 4 Annual Garden Tour
- 4 Annual General Meeting
- 4 Nursing Students

Contact us:
St Matthews-Maryland
Community Ministry
641 St Matthews Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 0G6

Phone: 774-3957

E-Mail: comymin@mts.net

www.stmatthewsmaryland.ca

Summer Plans

Our summer program focus is on families once again. Family Programming will begin in June.

- We are planning to start up Family Cook Nights again soon.
- Field trips to various locations. Details will be available at the Ellice St. Festival. See Daniel and the Urban Green Team at the St. MMCM table for more info.
- July 5-8th Family Camp at Lake Brereton in Whiteshell Provincial Park. Planning is underway for summer already. Families who attended camp last year will be given first opportunity to register this year. Sign up NOW! Registration is limited to a few families.
- Summer events (dates are not yet finalized):
 - Strawberry Picking – late June/early July dependent on readiness of crop.
 - Assiniboine Park Picnic – early to mid-July.
 - Winnipeg Beach Day for women and their children – last week of July.
 - Other events to be announced shortly.

Come out and have fun with St. MMCM staff! It's going to be a lively and fun time at the ministry this summer. For summer programming contact: Daniel Blaikie at 774-3957.

Pastoral Care Teams

A New Way to Volunteer

How do you get one Community Minister with five jobs to be in three places at one time? You can either clone her (too expensive) or find a lot of



Hello Everyone,

My name is Daniel Blaikie and I have recently begun working as this year's Summer Program Coordinator here at the St. Matthew's-Maryland Community Ministry.

Things are already shaping up for an exciting summer. We are working to repeat the success of some of last year's most popular events, including Beach Day and a family strawberry picking outing, to name just a couple.

Community gardening will continue this year in the North McGee garden and we are also looking forward to developing the green space at the corner of Agnes St. and St. Matthew's Avenue.

If you have ideas about summer programming or wish to volunteer, please feel free to contact me at 774-3957.

volunteers willing to take on some of the work.

Last year, when Ingrid left, the StMMCM Board made some decisions about delivering services. One was to expand Juanita's position to full time.

(Pastoral Care cont. from p.1) Another was to shift her work responsibilities more into program development and the longer range management of the Ministry. But this would clearly leave some gaps, especially in the drop-in. Who would respond to requests for emergency food aid? Who would provide a sympathetic ear? Who would make sure the drop-in stays a safe, welcoming environment? The only answer was volunteers.

In November the Board hired Janis Dahl to expand the volunteer program. The aim was to create Pastoral Care Teams, since renamed simply "Care Teams". These volunteers would be that presence in the drop-in to provide the support our community has come to expect from this Ministry.

Janis had a lot of work in front of her: define the role of these Care Teams; find the volunteers; train them; schedule and support them; put them in place and help the transition into this new role.

The model came from West Broadway where they have used such teams for several years. Together, Janis and Juanita built these teams at StMMCM. They were fortunate to find Care Team members among volunteers who were already familiar with this Ministry. And they found some new volunteers. Now there are 9 Care Team members and 3 of the 5 drop-in days are covered.

Janet K is one Care Team member. She originally came to StMMCM to help with Soup & Stories and there was an obvious 'fit' with the work planned for the Care Teams. Janet volunteered and now works in the drop-in every week. She was originally motivated simply by a desire "to help". Now she finds every day as a Care Team member a challenge and an opportunity to learn more about this community she is coming to appreciate more and more. "I love these people and I feel good about this work", she says.

The training of Care Team members continues. Learning about mental disorders, addictions, conflict resolution, other community services, first aid and the many other useful skills for this type of volunteering will be on-going. Janis and Juanita have done an amazing job launching this initiative but unfortunately, Janis is leaving Winnipeg.

Care Teams have quickly become an important part of this Ministry's work but it is the kind of volunteering that needs a lot of support: training, scheduling and encouraging. The StMMCM Board is exploring ways to find permanent funding for the volunteer coordinator position so there will be ongoing support for the teams. The Care Teams are well begun thanks to the work of Janis, Juanita and the volunteers.

Best Kept Secret

Community Ministries

If you are reading this article, chances are you are somewhat familiar with the five Community Ministries operating in Winnipeg, in association with the United Church. The Inner City Ministries are: St Matthews Maryland serving the west central neighbourhood; Oak Table meeting needs in Osborne Village; and West Broadway supporting the neighbourhood around Crossways in Common. Two additional Community Ministries are: North End Community Ministry serves a broad community from its home on Stella; and Rainbow Ministry serving Winnipeg's Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender community. Not many people can name these Ministries, let alone describe what they do or where and who they serve.

Many are also not aware that these Ministries have had to respond to major cuts in mission support. Each Ministry is working harder to reach out to its supporters within the community. And

this brings up a couple of important issues.

How can these Ministries do a better job of telling the story of their good works? How can they avoid competing with each other for community support? One answer seems to be better marketing.

Ashley Bettencourt is a U of W marketing student who has been working with Winnipeg Presbytery and these Ministries. Ashley's early talks led her to conclude that they do amazing things in their communities but they are all but invisible. Within the neighbourhoods they serve, the Ministries are building community, advocating for justice and positively impacting lives one at a time, every day. But how many people know these stories of every day success?

It's time to let this secret out. Starting this fall you can expect to see the stories of these Ministries told a little louder, a little clearer and a little wider. In September you will likely be hearing more about this initiative and the role that supporters of these Ministries can play in putting this work on more people's radar. Look for a slogan. Look for a logo. Look for an ad campaign that everyone can participate in.

We Want To Reduce Paper & Costs

You can help. Each time we e-mail our newsletter we save on paper and postage. If you would like to receive your copy of the StMatthews Maryland Community Ministry Newsletter by e-mail contact us at:

comymin@mts.net

Include your name and e-mail address. Of course, if you prefer a hard copy we'll keep sending you the newsletter to keep you in the loop.

Touched by the Holy

Juanita Mackinnon-Smith, Community Minister

People in our community live with a variety of life issues including being developmentally delayed, living with FASD, addictions, diabetes, epilepsy, schizophrenia, personality disorders, depression, bipolar: you name it and the ministry has likely provided support to someone living with these issues.

Anyone coming to the ministry for the first time might be forgiven for thinking it is just a place for a light lunch, conversation and maybe emergency food. And while that alone is a nice thing, so what? What difference would it really make to the people we serve? We do more.

We offer a listening ear, advocacy, referrals, programming, skill development and special events. We care and the community knows that because they bring their family members and friends. For 38 years this Ministry has earned the respect and trust of a community. This is a good thing! Here is one story highlighting this truth.

“L” arrived about an hour early for Women’s Drop-In carrying a small, locked metal box she desperately wanted opened. Over the course of the noon hour her story unfolded. Until the previous month, she had lived in a supported group home for women in another area of the city. On her own, she decided she wanted to move back to the inner city and live independently. She found an apartment, scrounged up a damage deposit and moved her meagre belongings to her new place. L has an EIA caseworker, a Supportive Living Worker and receives daily home care to administer her medications.

The move to a new apartment created a change in homecare districts meaning L’s homecare was cancelled in one area but not yet arranged in the new area. She had been without her seizure medication for 4 days. Her face bore evidence of a seizure – a contusion to her right cheek, a swollen upper lip, remnants of crusted blood on her nose and a scraped elbow. Her medication was inches away in the locked red metal box, but she didn’t know the combination. What do we do? How do we help? What IS helpful in this situation? Are there meds in the metal box? Are they L’s meds? Why doesn’t she have the combination? Has homecare really not been coming? Do we bust open the box? A thousand questions run through my mind. I ask her permission to contact her support workers to try and resolve the issue. I reassure her that by 4 pm I was prepared to use cutters to open the box, but only as a last resort!

L has a host of support workers, but, she has chosen to come to the ministry for help. She knows we will listen. She shares that other people ‘cut her off mid-sentence’ when she is trying to work through the details. Although independent minded, she is not one to assert herself in a conversation. With the support of Amber, U of M nursing student, a series of calls with varying results takes up the afternoon. Amber and I work our way through a long line of contacts, leave voicemail messages, await responses, follow up on leads that take us to L’s doctor, then her pharmacist who tries to contact homecare workers. Finally, the homecare worker calls us and provides the combination to the lock and, finally, access to L’s meds.

L is then set up with homecare for the following morning, the metal box relocked and sent home with her. Due to inconsistency in the administration of her meds – and maybe the stress created by the move and all the uncertainty – L seized and was hospitalized a few days later. Three times in three successive weeks she would return to the ministry for support.

L fell through the cracks of the system - to some extent by exercising her independence and making decisions on her own; and to some extent by a system that has so many support workers involved in her life that it is easy to assume someone else will pick up the threads. Caseloads and needs are high for social service agencies and, like the ministry, human resources are too few. Even when the system tries its best, people like L fall through the cracks. Because we build relationships with people, the ministry becomes a safety net for all who cross our threshold. We care and the community knows that. We have earned the respect and trust of a community. Thanks be to God!

A new and positive shift is that support workers from other agencies are beginning to contact us. That speaks to me of our credibility as an influence and a supportive presence in the lives of the people we choose to serve.

Blessed be!

Nursing Students

A great partnership

This Ministry is fortunate to have a great relationship with the nursing program at the U of M. Nursing students volunteer in the Men's and Women's drop in. This spring the students were Amanda and Paul.

In addition to their leadership and support for the drop-in, they made presentations on mental health and co-occurring addictions entitled Take Charge! A dozen men attended the

Men's DI presentation and twenty women attend the Women's DI. People in the community are well versed on mental health issues with many participants living with mental health issues and/or having family members or friends who live with them.

Upcoming Events

Watch for these

Community Consultation for Agnes St. Greenspace - Sat., May 29th 11am-1pm and Wed., June 2nd from 5-7pm at St.

MMCM. We are ready to move forward! Meet the landscape architect. Build on 2009 community consultations. Are we on the right track? Sarah Furgale, Agnes St. Resident and Community Liaison, and CM Staff will be on hand to answer questions and hear your thoughts. A meal will be served!

Ellice St. Festival - Friday eve **June 4th** and Saturday during the day

West Central Women's Resource Centre Walk-a-thon - June 9th. We're getting new neighbours! Yaay! Juanita MacKinnon-Smith, Community Minister, is accepting pledges for the walk-a-thon. We're excited to be getting new neighbours! Let's give them a warm welcome. Come out and support this great event.

St. Matthew's-Maryland Community Ministry Annual Urban Garden Tour June 19th - (see details this page)



Visit Gardens in Crescentwood

Urban Retreats Garden Tour

supporting
St. Matthew's-Maryland Community Ministry
Community Gardens program

Saturday, June 19, 2010

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Tickets \$15.00

available at

McNally- Robinson Bookstore

and

The Garden Room 444 Academy Road

or by calling

St. Matthew's-Maryland Community Ministry
at 774-3957

Manitoba Tea: 11:30-2:00 p.m. at Crescent Fort Rouge United Church. Tickets for the Tea and Bannock are an additional \$5.00 available at the tea site that Saturday. Please use the Wardlaw Ave. entrance to the church.

St Matthew's-Maryland
Community Ministry

Annual General Meeting

Thursday, June 17, 2010

5PM

641 St Matthews Ave.

Lower Level Hall

Speakers:

Jim Silver

U of W professor and author of
Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg

&

Wab Kinew

CBC broadcaster and producer of
Not Enough Money

Everyone Is Welcome

