

Closer to “Home”- A Local Response to Homelessness

What’s in a “Home”?

There’s no place like home—Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz

There’s no place like it, but what is home? Is it just a roof over head, or is it more than that? Perhaps a safe resting place, a place of belonging where we build lives, nurture our families, create community and learn to orient ourselves to the rest of the world. I just want to go home. “Home” is a basic need for each one of us. Isaiah places home in a special way and special place: God.

You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat” (Isaiah 25:4)

Indeed, in worship we sing, “You have been a shelter, Lord, to every generation.” These words offer hope to those in need, but if God is a shelter, what are we to do as His hands and feet in Halton?

Homelessness in Halton?

In a region as affluent as Halton, one would think homelessness and affordable housing would be non-issues. Sadly this is not so! Every year, as many as 1200 people are homeless in Halton. In addition, almost 2,000 households wait 16-18 years for affordable housing.

This month the Outreach Team has the privilege to share about two local partner ministries that demonstrate God’s love to those in need of housing: **Habitat for Humanity** and **Room at the Inn**.

A Christian Response to Affordable Housing: Habitat for Humanity-Halton

Habitat for Humanity-Halton is a non-profit, faith-based organization working for a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live. It is part of a worldwide network involving 100 countries. Habitat’s mission is to mobilize volunteers and the community, in building affordable housing and promoting home ownership as a way to break the poverty cycle. The goal in Halton is to positively impact 128 low income families by 2013.

How we can serve with Habitat?

There are many ways to support Habitat for Humanity and put our faith into action. The opportunities to serve include:

- Participate in a team build. You can make a huge difference in the lives of families in need of a Hand Up, not a Hand Out, while strengthening bonds and learning new skills.
- Work at, Shop at or Donate to Habitat’s Re-store (905) 637-4446.
- Donate funds to assist in building houses locally (A portion of our Christmas Eve offering went to Habitat for Humanity–Halton)

- Volunteer to raise awareness by staffing an information booth at a community fair or help at a fundraising events

“Habitat for Humanity is a local expression of faith, compassion and social justice working to eliminate homelessness and poverty.”

For more information go to www.habitathalton.ca or call (905) 637-4446.

Christian Compassion for the Homeless: Room at the Inn

The **Room at the Inn** is a local outreach program which responds to homelessness in Burlington. When a family becomes homeless Halton Region may choose to place them in a temporarily in a motel until more suitable housing can be found. Although the family may have a roof over their head, this arrangement often displaces a family from their own community, the space may be cramped and does not provide the resources required to cook and keep nutritious meals, do homework or have any privacy.

The Room at the Inn is a drop-in center at the Crestwood Motel in Burlington and is supported by The Salvation Army, Compass Point Bible Church, Forest View, Church without Walls and Wellington Square.

Staff and Volunteers at Room at the Inn provide:

- a safe place for families to visit
- referrals to services and supports
- prayer support
- housing information
- access to a computer, free books and Bibles
- emergency food and fresh hot meals
- winter clothing

How we can serve:

- Pray for the leaders, volunteers and the people who Room at the Inn ministers to
- Volunteer your time
- Sign up to Cook and deliver a crock pot meal
- Knit hats, scarves, mitts
- Donate used Christian books, small children’s toys, toiletries, grocery gift cards, bus tickets, goods for a welcome hamper
- Spread the good news about this important ministry

For more information contact Heidi Ram (905) 331-0682 or outreach@compasspointonline.ca