



The Beacon



Toronto Harbour Light Ministries / Homestead Addiction Services

Winter/Spring 2017

The Salvation Army's Mission

The Salvation Army exists to share the love of Jesus Christ, meet human needs and be a transforming influence in the communities of our world

Toronto Harbour Light Ministries Mission

Toronto Harbour Light Ministries is a place of New Beginnings that builds community through faith, health, dignity and hope.

Our Vision

In cooperation with others, we will be a stimulus for excellence encouraging people to explore their full potential and experience new beginnings.

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Volunteers Needed

Being a volunteer brings a sense of purpose to life and the satisfaction which comes from having a positive influence and impact on someone else's life. It can be a truly enriching experience.

To volunteer call Heather Irwin at: (416) 682-2494 or email: volunteer@harbourlight.org

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

Christmas Memories and Stories by THLM ESL Students



I was really excited for my first Christmas with snow. I'm from Chile, and for us it's summer season. I had never had a white Christmas before. I knew about it because I often saw snow in the movies. The decorations, skating and even the ugly Christmas sweaters were new and nice for me. A few days before Christmas I realized that we didn't have a Christmas tree, so we took a branch from the street and with some homemade things, made a small, but cute, one. We didn't have snow last Christmas and that was a little disappointing for me, but it was still good and special to experience this different and new Christmas far away from my home and my family. – Natalia Acosta, Chile

In Serbia people have celebrated Orthodox Christmas for centuries on the 7th of January. Christmas is a very important custom in our tradition. Before Christmas we fast for 40 days. The day before Christmas is the last day of fasting. During the fasting all the food is vegan. For Christmas the father of the home brings Badnjak (oak branch) into the home. The housewife makes cesnica (Christmas cake with symbolic meaning). For Christmas dinner we serve a lot of food. The table is full of different kinds of food such as pork rotisseri, soup, cabbage rolls, veggies, salads, cookies and cakes. The day after Christmas we usually go to the relatives to celebrate. We celebrate Christmas for 3 days. "God's Peace, Christ is born" with the reply "Really is born" or "Truth is born" is our traditional greeting during Christmas.

– Lyilyana Milosavljevic, Serbia



For me, Christmas is one of the most sublime holidays. With the birth of Jesus, God gave us the purest and most true love. It is for this reason that we celebrate the arrival of Jesus as we gather around a table and thank the Father with prayers. I had, like everyone else, many Christmases, but I remember the poorest. I would have been around 12 years old and my father was in the hospital. On December 24th he left the hospital without medical permission and came home to surprise us with the hug and kiss of Christmas. After so many years I had forgotten about this, but when asked to share a story, this memory came back to me. We are formed by love, by Divine Love, so that everything we do is guided by Love kept in our heart. – Maria Ofelia Pena Coleman



We celebrate Christmas by preparing special food for the holiday and we buy new clothes and shoes to wear that day. We see a lot of people everywhere and you hear a lot of noise at midnight for the artificial lights and you can say to your friends: "Happy Christmas!" – Ronaldo Jiron Eamos



The Story about Christmas Song: "Carol of the Bells"

"Shchedryk" is a Ukranian shchedrivka, or New Year's carol. It was arranged by the Ukranian composer and teacher, Mykola Leontovych in 1916. "Shchedryk" was originally sung on the night of January 13th, New Year's Eve (Julian Calendar), which is "Shcedry vechir" – "Bountiful Evening" in English. Early performances of the piece were made by students at Kyiv University. "Shchedryk" was later adapted as an English Christmas carol, "Carol of the Bells", by Peter J. Wilhousky, following a performance of the original song by Olexander Koshetz's Ukranian National Chorus at Carnegie Hall on October 5, 1921. The song became popular in the United States and Canada where it became strongly associated with Christmas. "Hark how the bells, sweet silver bells, all seem to

say 'throw cares away. Christmas is here, bringing good cheer...Merry, Merry, Merry Christmas!'" – Lyudmyla Shymanovych (Picture by my daughter, Jenny)

I have one brother and one sister. My sister likes Christmas decorations and every year she decorates the house. Usually Christmas decorations start on the 13th of December, two weeks before Christmas. My brother likes cooking with my Mum and I like to set the table with a tree and creche. On the 24th of December we usually eat something with my grandparents and then we go to church to pray for the birth of Jesus at 12:00 am on the 25th of December. The night between the 24th and the 25th, the children wait for Santa Claus, sometimes some families like to prepare for Santa Claus a glass of milk and a biscuit. The parents prepare the gifts under the tree and when the children come home after service at the church, they are so happy to open their gifts and then we go to bed. On the 25th of December we have a big lunch with my family (cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents). The lunch goes from 12:00pm to 8:00pm and during the afternoon we usually play games like cards, board games and enjoy the day.

– Chiara Cuzzocrea



NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Hello! My name is Heather Irwin and I am the new Volunteer Services and Special Events Coordinator at the Salvation Army, Toronto Harbour Light Ministries. Welcome to the Autumn/Winter edition of our Newsletter.



I hope you enjoy reading some interesting stories, news, information and general updates on our programs and services. We are grateful for the opportunity to share with you the ongoing journeys happening here and at all our THLM/Homestead Addiction Services sites. My best wishes to you and yours for a joy-filled holiday season!

□ Heather Irwin, Volunteer/Special Events Coordinator

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM

The Transitional Housing Program is a recovery-oriented, abstinence-based program which has 98 rent-geared-to-income bachelor apartment units for men and women where individual adults can stay for up to 11 months. Each resident develops an individualized case plan which is reviewed and worked on with their assigned caseworker. This allows for consistent personal growth for residents and provides structure and accountability as they strive for their goals. Residents are also offered several programming options where life skills and living skills can be developed.

Our vision is that people moving through the Transitional Housing Program will explore their full potential, and improve their capacity for healthy, independent, meaningful living in the community. We have started a new initiative where we provide a structured relapse prevention group on Tuesdays for men living in THP who struggle with substance use.

□ Sylvia Gomes, Program Coordinator

SCARBOROUGH HOMESTEAD ADDICTION SERVICES

We offer ten week Community Day Treatment Programs for men and women who have a substance use issue, that focus on group therapy; relapse prevention, life skill classes, spiritual care and a stage one trauma group.

The Women's Community Day Treatment Program runs Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12:00pm – 3:00pm.

The Men's Community Day Treatment Program runs Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00am – 1:00pm.

Women's Aftercare runs Wednesdays from 4:00pm – 5:30pm and Men's Aftercare runs Thursdays from 4:00pm – 5:30pm.

If you require any information, or if you would like to participate in any of the community treatment programs, please contact 416-431-4379 ext. 221

We also offer a Supportive Housing Program to 27 women who have a substance use issue. The Supportive Housing Program offers case management and addiction counselling support to its clients. To be eligible for the Women's Supportive Housing Program, the criteria is:

- Connection to Scarborough
- Homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Verifiable source of income (OW or ODSP)
- Are frequent users (min. 3-5 incidences) of crisis services such as Withdrawal Management Services, Addiction Treatment Services and/or Emergency Hospital Services.

For more information, please contact:
416-431-4379, ext. 226

ADDICTION OUTREACH PROGRAM

The Shelter Outreach Program can be found at the following locations:

- Maxwell Meighen Centre
- The Gateway
- Florence Booth House
- Evangeline Residence
- Cawthra Road Shelter
- Peel Family Shelter
- Wilkinson Road Shelter
- Halton Lighthouse Shelter

Our Addiction Counsellors work in the shelter providing case management and addiction counselling support to men and women. The addiction counsellors work to connect clients to other community agencies to ensure a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

For more information please contact:
416-366-2733 ext. 233

CHURCH NOTES

On April 17, 2016 at 3:30pm, a team of 8 volunteers opened the doors at The Harbour Light Community Church in downtown Toronto and invited the community to RECLAIM – doing church differently!

What does Reclaim look like? People sit around tables, chatting, drinking coffee or tea along with enjoying a delicious biscuit or muffin and hum along with the Worship Team as they run over the afternoon's music. Reclaim is about intentionally setting a casual atmosphere of comfort and acceptance.

Then things start and everyone joins in singing praises to God, listening to a message from Scripture (and as promised, the message is 10 minutes or less in length!). Discussion of the message then follows and everyone is free to participate based on their own comfort levels. Sometimes a full, open discussion takes place or it can be smaller discussions at individual tables. We have people from all walks of life putting forth opinions, answering questions or sharing their personal experience and journeys.

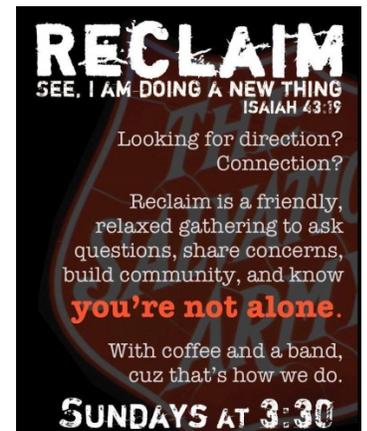
Groups have consisted of: a retired Salvation Army Commissioner sitting alongside someone struggling with substance use; a Reclaim Team leader alongside a grandmother; an older man from a nearby shelter alongside a young woman from a neighborhood apartment building – each contributing equally in the conversation and sharing their experiences.

People are given the opportunity to contribute to the church and as the offering is collected, so are prayer request forms which are laid-out beforehand on the tables. Reclaim team representatives will pray for these concerns aloud if specified on the form and privately otherwise.

The wrap-up is more lively praise and worship music combined with the sharing of good news, stories, announcements and welcoming newcomers.

On April 17, the group of 8 didn't know if they were going to be the only ones in attendance when the doors opened at 3:30pm. To date, the attendance has been running between 20-30 people. BUT, there is room for more—MAYBE, even, YOU!!

□ Major Bruce Power, Re-Claim Leader





For many people winter seems to speak of barrenness, frigid feelings of discomfort and discontent, with icy shadows sprawled across frozen ponds or messy ice-covered roads. But not all agree, for some, a year without winter would be a devastating disappointment. What better time to warm up alongside a crackling fire, listen to some fine music, to reflect and gain new perspective - to stroll along the back roads of our minds and to count our blessings - the ideal occasion to slow down – to invest a few extra hours (or minutes) in quiet reverence.

Today, looking out my window as I watch the season's first sparkling flakes of snow, I do just that. And as I reflect I am reminded of the 'night-of-nights' that had begun as every other night had before it, yet became the greatest, most significant night of history – the **transforming** 'light of the world' had come.

As I continue my ponderings my mind returns to my present setting "Homestead. " and I see the results of and potential for other significant moments as staff and clients go about their 'typical' day. Staff meeting human needs and being a transforming influence while clients actively participate in their art of personal change and transformation. An awesome opportunity and privilege to observe and be a part of!

Why not join with me, when an opportunity arises, wrap up in a blanket, sit by the fire, (or wherever) and invest in a few moments of quiet reverence. Amid the glitter and busyness of the season, don't lose sight of the miracle of that first Christmas or the miracles that continue to take place around us.

May the transforming light shine in your life this season!

From Homestead Spiritual Care

MESSAGE FROM THE E.D.

Showers of Blessings!

Winter is a time when plants, trees, and animals rest up and recharge to prepare for a busy spring. While work never stops at Toronto Harbour Light Ministries, we do have a brief time in the winter to pause, review, and give thanks for the hundreds and hundreds of willing, cheerful helpers who have been there for us, helping us to achieve our mission, particularly at Christmastime.

Every person ringing a bell at a kettle, or serving a turkey dinner, or packing a Christmas gift shows their love to others, and their support for The Salvation Army. We are so grateful to each of you, as well as for our year round volunteers who tend our garden, work in our kitchen, teach others to speak English, play the guitar, or use a computer.

Our volunteers make our programs richer and more beneficial for our community than we could ever do by ourselves. When our volunteers lead a yoga, journaling, bible study, or recovery group, they are communicating their love and compassion to each member of our community. We say that Toronto

Harbour Light Ministries is a place of new beginnings that builds community through faith, health, dignity and hope—and our volunteers are such an important part of building that community.

We thank God for each of you, and we know that you will receive a 'shower of blessings' because of your willing service.

A heartfelt thank you from all of us at Toronto Harbour Light Ministries!

□ Major Elizabeth Price, Executive Director

