

OUTREACH UPDATE

Outreach Update – Our Faith in Action

During the past few months, Leaside United has been presented with some extraordinary challenges. Many church members have done profound soul-searching and discussing to develop a renewed vision and plan for our future. On Sunday, March 8th, with almost 100 church members in attendance, the Congregational Annual General Meeting approved:

- a) **the Joint Needs Assessment Committee (J.N.A.C.) report which contains specific recommendations for the hiring of a half-time equivalent for leadership in Christian Development aspects of ministry;**
- b) **a balanced budget for 2009;**
- c) **the reaffirmation of the 80th Anniversary Project Objective of \$20,000 to be raised for the new Ina Grafton Gage Home by June 30th, 2009; and**
- d) **the 2009 Mission and Service plus World Development objectives of \$46,000 and \$2,000 respectively.**

To help balance the 2009 church budget, the Outreach Committee recommended a reduced M. & S. objective and other measures which the Council amended and the congregation approved on March 8th. The M. & S. objective for 2008 was **\$56,000** (\$55,000 was donated) while there is a \$10,000 reduced '09 target so that supporters of this outreach fund of our national church may hopefully make one of the following choices for 2009:

- a) **(preferred choice) maintain one's 2008 level of support and offer supragifts to the Local Fund of the church to help to right the deficit; or**
- b) **redirect 20% of your 2008 level of M. & S. support to our church's Local Fund for 2009.**

It is hoped that choice -> b) shall only be needed for 2009.

Throughout the challenges of the past months, Leaside United's outreach has continued to help those in need, both in local and distant communities.

The story of the Meeker family's Christmas Mission to El Hogar School (Honduras) for desperately poor and/or orphaned boys and girls stirred our hearts, minds and spirits during a special January service. Our church now officially sponsors half the costs of 2 young boys, totally \$1,500 U.S. annually and has sufficient funds for the next two years of sponsorship.

During December 2008, Advent Outreach disbursements continued to offer support by both monetary and gifts-in-kind (needed items) to a variety of organizations. These groups work to promote and provide: affordable housing, out-of-the-cold programs, holistic help for families, women, youth and teen moms in need and refugee support. On an on-going basis, requested items for young moms at the Massey Centre on Broadview Avenue are regularly donated and transported there.

During March 2009, additional disbursements of \$1,000 each were forwarded to the Out-of-the-Cold programs at Eastminster U.C. (Danforth Ave.) and Newtonbrook U.C. (Cummer Ave.) where help and hope are offered to more than 100 people at each site on a one-day-a-week basis. These on-going partnerships are part of the legacy of outreach at Leaside United.

Toque sales during Dec. '08 to Feb. '09 again generated \$1,000 for Raising-the-Roof, an organization devoted to promoting and supporting affordable housing policies, initiatives and established groups.

Leaside's 80th Anniversary Project is to raise \$20,000 in order to furnish 4 rooms at the new Ina Grafton Gage Home, located on the east side of Warden Avenue about 500m south of the Warden-St. Clair Ave. East T.T.C. Station. It is hoped that this care facility will be open in May 2009. Already, around \$800 in Leaside United Church member donations and a wonderfully generous gift of \$10,000 from the Awesome Sale Folks have been received. We are hopeful that by June 30th, our goal shall be achieved.

Indeed, there is a lot to celebrate and for which to give thanks in spite of some difficult challenges. To keep members of Leaside United Church informed regularly of outreach activities and support levels, the Committee shall utilize a variety of communications methods. Watch for Bulletin announcements, articles in Happenings, info on the Outreach Bulletin Board (Office stairway), updates on LUC.'s website and large barometers of progress re our objectives for the 2009 Mission and Service Fund and for the 80th Anniversary project (Ina Grafton Gage Home). Let us rededicate ourselves to "help those in need" so that the legacy of outreach of Leaside United Church may continue.

Next Outreach Meeting - April 19/09 at 12:15 p.m. After Church in the Auditorium