

Report to Classis from Thunder Bay Christian Community Centre

March Classis, 2010

In Jean Vanier's book *Finding Peace* he says:

We work for peace every time we exercise authority with wisdom and authentic love. This love is not sentimental; it reveals to people who they are, enabling them to make choices and to follow their consciences. It is listening to people and appreciating them just as they are.

That is what we find ourselves called to do at the Thunder Bay Christian Community Centre. We bring a message of peace to those who come through our doors. We do this in a variety of ways.

We offer food to those who are in need. This number has dramatically increased over this past year. The demand for emergency food hampers has doubled from 2008 to 2009. We are so thankful for our area CRC churches that regularly collect food for the Centre through reverse food offerings. They have kept our shelves full of food for our emergency food hampers so that we have been able to meet the demand. The line-ups for our regular food distribution have increased from an average of 60 people each Tuesday afternoon to an average of 90. We offer free clothing, as well as a small amount of household goods that come through our doors, to those who are in need.

We offer a listening ear and opportunities to pray with those who need to unburden themselves or whose families are in crisis. We offer Bible studies for women – our Coffee Break numbers are rising again, for which we praise God as we continue to learn and grow together by studying God's word and applying it to our lives. We offer a one-on-one Bible study, Bethesda, for women who need healing from their wounded pasts.

We offer Bible programs to children. An afterschool group, Kids' Time, continues to meet each Wednesday for children ages 5-10. This group is small, but vibrant. Little Lambs is offered to pre-school children of our community food hamper volunteers and to children of our Coffee Break members.

We offer life-skills to the community through an adult literacy program and through our early reading, early math and (soon-to-come) resiliency program for pre-school children and their parents.

And in all of these programs, we offer friendship and love and focus on building relationships with those whom we encounter at the Centre. Through these relationships and programs, we continue to speak God's message of peace and reconciliation. We pray that God will continue to work through us in this place and in the neighbourhood of which we are a part.

Please continue to pray for us as staff and board as we seek to continue to minister to Thunder Bay. Please also pray for our building which is seeing some challenges – a new roof most of all.

Thank you for all your support.

Submitted by Yvonne Schenk, coordinator