

CITY OF REFUGE

SUMMER 2023, VOL 26



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LEADERS DEDICATION SERVICE

By Greg Paul

For many of us in the Sanctuary community, it feels as if, at long last—after a dire few years—there’s some new life blossoming among us.

There are many encouraging signs that, while it’s both inadvisable and impossible to return to “the way things were,” we are recovering a way of being and an identity that have taken a beating for some time. Most of those signs are subtle, but one is obvious, necessary and most welcome: we have a new leadership structure and new people filling those roles.

On a Sunday night recently, our little band of worshippers gathered to bless and encourage Simon Beck, our new(ish) Executive Director, and our new co-Pastoral Directors, Rachel Tulloch and Tanja Futter. We also expressed our deep gratitude to

Simon Beairsto for stepping into the breach for over a year to provide critical leadership and management in most complicated and challenging circumstances. It was my honour, having been Sanctuary’s first Pastoral Director, then Executive Director, to speak a few words of introduction and appreciation. Then, as has been our tradition in years past, we called the four to the centre of the room, gathered around with our hands linking each other and them, and prayed many words of blessing, encouragement and love upon them.

One body; many members; individual abilities and responsibilities. As we blessed and affirmed Simon, Rachel, Tanja and Simon, it seemed very much as if our identity as a kingdom community was being affirmed as well.



BBQ AT WOODBINE BEACH

By Sheryl M

It's sometimes easy for me to forget the impact of a place until the place changes and the difference is palpable. Being at Sanctuary's Woodbine Beach Barbeque was one of those changes, exchanging car horns for the sound of water. This was a refreshing realization that getting to forget how much humans are creatures of place is pure privilege. It also reminded me of the Jesus story where he is cooking fish on a fire by the beach. Right after rising from the dead, He makes it a priority to surprise a group of people who are out in a boat and just sit and eat with them. His first words aren't about death and resurrection and heaven, just the startlingly incongruous invitation to "come and have breakfast."

From hearing the group of people cheering Angela as she danced into the still-cool water, to wandering with M.J, Rob, and Aimee through the brown-sugar sand, to Victor's invitation to peruse his tea and health magazine collection, and getting to sit with a variety of people with various connections to each other as the light turned slow gold, I am starting to learn what welcome and presence are. In the popsicles and spicy sausages at Woodbine Beach, I am reminded that a meal is nothing less than Jesus inviting us to be present with Him, and with each other. There is no unique thought here, just overwhelming hope. And hope is worth jumping frantically into a lake fully clothed for and swimming toward Him who redeems our betrayals.



NIGHT AT GRACE'S

By Rachel Tulloch

On the afternoon of Saturday, June 17, our community gathered on the parking pad in the bright sunshine for our first post-pandemic Night at Grace's!

For many years, Sanctuary house band Red Rain was joined by other artists and bands to put on a concert for our community. It was always a time to move beyond the daily grind into a time of celebration, togetherness, and dancing with abandon. The inspiration for the name is one of Red Rain's songs, "Resurrection Parade," in which they imagine a dingy pub in the back corner of heaven, where all the people who think they've "barely made it through the gates" hang out. Red Rain plays there and Jesus occasionally steps in to play saxophone! The pub is called "Grace's Bar and Grill".

While our recent event did not take place at night, and it was sunny instead of dark and dingy, the spirit of Night at Grace's was definitely present. The band's music filled the air and drew in many passersby around the neighbourhood. Many of Red Rain's classic songs were recognized by those who have been around our community for years. They were complemented by a couple of songs from our own Kelliann Robinson, a hilarious rendition of "Who's on First Base?" by Richard Bechard and Mark Lewis, and a display of beautiful art work for sale by our talented community artists.





A row of tables with delicious finger foods prepared by Ronald and the kitchen crew completed our perfect Saturday afternoon party. Many people sat around the tables and across the street eating, chatting, and enjoying the music while others just couldn't stop dancing!

As we emerge from a season of grief and loss, this afternoon was a step towards us living out our calling to be a healthy and welcoming community. And while Sanctuary's old brick building usually feels overshadowed by the giant condo buildings in our surrounding neighbourhood, Night at Grace's felt like the beating heart of our community life was on display for all nearby to see.

As our executive director, Simon Beck, wrote in an email after the event, "The joyful ruckus this afternoon felt like a resounding reminder of God's faithfulness: though weeping may last for the night, joy comes in the morning; our mourning has been turned into dancing (Ps. 30)." We hope you will join us for the next one!



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COMMUNITY FIELD TRIP



By Rica Piccio

Today was a day of sunshine, food, friends and frogs! A day of pure bliss. The sun graced us with its radiant warmth as we embarked on an unforgettable journey. The car played the enchanting tunes of 50's and 60's music, igniting a flood of memories and laughter. Being fully present with others, sharing meals, and exchanging stories reminded me of life's simple joys that I often overlook.

We gathered at a charming farm, relishing a homemade lunch amidst nature's tranquil embrace. Richard, filled with gratitude, shared that it had been far too long since he had savoured such happiness. This outing was a precious escape for our Sanctuary community, allowing us to embrace each other. Betty, one of our spirited kitchen staff, joined us on a hike, fuelled by her desire to spot frogs. And behold, we encountered them! Betty's joy was contagious as she danced and exclaimed, "I feel like a kid again! I love it here!"

We concluded the day with a visit to an ice cream shop, trying heavenly flavours that mirrored the sweetness of our shared experience. This day served as a gentle reminder to cherish life's simplicities, the power of companionship, and the wonders of nature.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT



GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY

By Volunteer Contract Committee

We have a wonderful group of volunteers and contract staff who contribute so much to our community—helping our kitchen run, preparing and serving delicious meals, and keeping our building clean.

A few weeks ago, after our Tuesday meal, the Volunteer Contract Committee took a group of our beloved contract workers to see the Guardians of the Galaxy 3 movie to celebrate!

While there are a few comic book fans among us, most of us just enjoyed the chance to get away together, eat popcorn, and enjoy the story. The movie gives the tragic backstory of one of the main characters, Rocket Raccoon, but it also celebrates a group of zany characters coming together to look after each other at all costs. It was strangely reminiscent of the out-of-the-box beauty of our Sanctuary community.

According to Matt, “I loved the movie, and it was a great surprise it was all about Rocket. Good show.”

We are looking forward to our next group outing!

RUN/WALK/ROLL

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday September 16
Tommy Thompson Park



UPCOMING EVENTS

WE HAVE EXCITING NEWS!

Strides for Sanctuary returns in person this year and registration is officially open.

Sign up to join the fun and support the work we do for this wonderful community.

HOW TO REGISTER:

- 1: Open the Registration Link
- 2: Click the red Register button
- 3: Create a Race Roster account
- 4: Choose to run/walk/roll 5k or 10k
- 5: Fill out the form
6. Join a team, create your own or run solo
7. Agree to terms and pay the fee

You're all set! Thank you!

Ages 11+ \$40.00 Early Bird Rate





FINANCIAL UPDATE

By Simon Beck

This year has been filled with many challenges and financial pressures for many of our donors, just like so many in our community. We are so grateful for your steadfast financial support, and we understand that the rising cost of housing, energy bills, rapid food inflation, and the spectre of recession have led many to simply need to re-evaluate their budgets. Unfortunately, this has meant a slowing of donations faster than we had anticipated, with donations running behind budget for the first part of this year. That being said, it is so humbling that many of you have continued your faithful support and I am so thankful that despite all these pressures you are facing too, you've found a way to keep supporting our work.

In spite of the pressure rising costs are also putting on our budget, because of your generosity, we are blessed to have finished 2022 in a strong financial position. This means we've not had to reduce the support we offer for our community and have been able to continue to welcome new and old friends to break bread together, create art together, dance together, and bear together. Thank you!

[SANCTUARY]

I WANT TO HELP!

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