



CCSAC NEWSLETTER

CENTRETOWN CHURCHES SOCIAL
ACTION COMMITTEE

November 2021

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Chair: Kristine Burr
Vice-Chair: Emmy Verdun
Secretaries: Elizabeth Demaray &
Mary Mussell
Treasurer: Janet Rivers
Communications & Newsletter
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Lorna Kingston
Facebook Coordinator: Anisha Eipe

Member Churches:

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Christ Church Cathedral
Church of the Ascension
Dominion-Chalmers United
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First Baptist
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Glebe-St. James United
Knox Presbyterian
Quaker Ottawa Meeting
St. Andrew's Presbyterian
St. Barnabas Anglican
St. Giles Presbyterian
St. John the Evangelist Anglican
St. Matthew's Anglican
St. Patrick's Basilica
St. Peter's Lutheran
St. Peter & St. Paul's Anglican
St. Teresa's Roman Catholic
Southminster United
Trinity Anglican

Our Mission:

To unite Christians of all
denominations through joint
participation in social projects and
prayer.

Get in Touch!

We would love to hear from you!
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Walk for the Centre 2021

by Elizabeth Demaray

October 3rd was a rainy day but that did not dampen the enthusiasm of the many people who participated in the 6th Annual Walk in support of the Centretown Emergency Food Center (CEFC). Again this year, the walk was a virtual event due to the continuing Covid 19 pandemic. People were encouraged to walk alone or with family or friends in their own neighbourhood or favourite trail, keeping safety and public health guidelines in mind.

The Centretown Churches Social Action Committee (CCSAC) organized this event to draw attention to the issue of food insecurity in downtown Ottawa and to raise funds for the local Food Centre. CCSAC made good use of social media by promoting the Walk on our Website and Facebook page. The CCSAC Walk Committee, chaired by Elizabeth Kent, started preparations early in the year and worked diligently to get sponsorships from several local businesses as well as preparing posters and other publicity for churches and community.



Individuals were invited to donate online on our web page through CanadaHelps. Some churches sent cheques to CCSAC from donations received from their members. About \$36,000 was raised for the Food Centre.

Walkers were encouraged to decorate the Walk sign and carry it with them on their walk. They were also invited to submit photos of their walk. Prizes were given for six categories such as "most scenic" or "best decorated Walkathon poster" "cutest photo of pet on Walkathon". Thanks to our generous business sponsors for the excellent prizes.

CCSAC is most grateful for the success of this event again this year.

New Clergy at CCSAC Church



Rev. Mark Whittall, a former parishioner at Trinity Anglican Church, became its new priest in September 2021. Rev. Whittall has degrees from Oxford University and worked as an engineer. He later studied theology at St. Paul's University and was ordained in 2008.

What We've Learned About Food Centre Visitors!

by Michael Hatfield

The typical visitor to the Centretown Emergency Food Centre (CEFC) in July was a single male whose main source of income was disability benefits from the Ontario government or the Canada Pension Plan.

The clientele of the CEFC also varies from month to month. Only half had used the centre more than twice in the first seven months of 2021, and 10% of July's clients were first time visitors.

These are just two of the interesting facts revealed by a recent survey of 161 clients conducted by the centre's manager, Diana Mahaffey. Participants in the survey represent just under half the 341 households served in that month.

The survey was voluntary, and participants could choose not to answer some of the survey questions. Clients whose first language was neither English nor French were less likely to participate in the survey.

The most surprising finding for Diana was the month-to-month turnover in centre clients. "Well over a third of clients had visited the centre only once this year," she observed. Other features of the client profile which emerged from the survey include the following:

- Just over half of participants live in subsidized housing. Another fifth lived in rooming houses or shelters.
- Males outnumbered females about three to one.
- Only 44% relied on non-disability benefits or earnings as their main source of income.
- Over four in five households consisted of a single person.
- Almost three-quarters of clients walked to the centre.

The purpose of the survey was to better understand the characteristics of the households using the centre. Mahaffey found the responses most useful in understanding how to better meet the needs of clients were the concentration of visitors from single-person households and the type of kitchen facilities clients had access to.

Most stated that they had access to full kitchen facilities (56%) or shared a kitchen (35%). This indicates that they could cook full meals of meat, fish and fresh produce and could refrigerate dairy products, eggs and other perishable items. This information encourages the Centre to make a wider variety of fresh and perishable foods available.

Danielle Rolfe and Soul Space Ottawa



We were pleased to have Danielle Rolfe, Creator and Coordinator of Soul Space Ottawa, as guest speaker at our meeting on October 4. Soul Support is a collection of faith and community members who tend to the spiritual needs of street health care workers who are caring for people experiencing homelessness, addictions, and mental health issues in Ottawa. Ms. Rolfe shared two videos: "Rise Up Strong" about the need to support street health and harm reduction workers and the other about a retreat for these frontline workers. She graciously answered questions about how we can spread the word about Soul Space and how CCSAC churches can offer their support to the workers. For more information about Soul Space, visit their website at <http://www.soulpaceottawa.ca/>.