

The BUGLE

St. Andrew's United Church Outreach

AROUND THE WORLD AND IN OUR COMMUNITY

February, 2008



What Is M&S? Not Just Another Charity

As I was reading a United Church congregational brochure one day I was surprised to see a mention of collecting gifts for the Mission and Service Fund charity. I looked around the empty hall wanting to say, "The Mission and Service Fund is not a charity." Since no one was in earshot, I saved my response for here.

Many organizations work for a better world by addressing one cause or another. The Mission and Service Fund, on the other hand, is the unique way we as the United Church witness to God's love, whether it be with overseas partners, in Canadian outreach, in hospital or university chaplaincies, in supporting small congregations, or in assisting intern ministers. It is not really possible to compare the M&S Fund to any charity - it is much bigger, more encompassing than any of these. It is the church.

The M&S Fund represents our collective way to be God's presence in the world - to be the church, to love and serve, to seek justice, to live with respect in creation. It gives us a collective voice in advocating change, justice, and peace, whether through the Canadian government or in work with our ecumenical partners. The M&S Fund ensures that we are participating together in all of this work and more.

It has been said that "for Christians giving isn't an option," and for United Church members, M&S shouldn't be. We all make decisions about which charities we want to support. For United Church members, giving to the M&S Fund should be automatic.

From M&S pages on the United Church Website.

*M&S is who we are and what we do.
It's the United Church faith in action.*

M&S Global Partners

The United Church of Canada has partnerships with national churches, ecumenical organizations, Christian Councils and church agencies around the world. Some of these partnerships have evolved from overseas mission work which started in the late 19th century and some from recent contact and collaboration.

In addition to these partners, there are numerous indigenous church and community organizations whose work is touched and supported by these partners.

The United Church of Canada and its global partners are called to work together in God's mission for wholeness of life. The Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations Unit facilitates the relationships that enable The United Church of Canada and global partners to work together. We are one partner among many, called to receive and to give.

Too many to list here! Go to: <http://www.united-church.ca/global/>

M&S Canadian Partners

This listing is three pages! http://www.united-church.ca/msfund/pdf/can_ministries.pdf

What has the Mission and Service Fund ever done for St. Andrew's?

Well, the M&S Fund is in action in St. Andrew's right now. When Sarah Chapman leads us in worship, reads the scripture, does the Prayers of the People, presents the "Theological Worlds Workshop, we see and hear the Mission and Service Fund in action. The Atlantic School of Theology, where Sarah is taking her training, is supported by the Mission and Service Fund, as is her student internship at St. Andrew's!

M&S Checklist

- ◆ M&S is a unified fund. We pool our money to fund all our work.
- ◆ M&S funds almost ALL the work we do as the United Church.
- ◆ Gifts are voluntary. Individuals and congregations must decide how much to give.
- ◆ M&S work includes ministry support, theological colleges, Presbyteries and Conferences, core funding to 170 churches, chaplaincies, overseas personnel, global work, outreach work in Canada, justice and environmental advocacy, ecumenical partnership, partnership overseas, the work of the General Council Office, support for archives, Spirit Connection, and The Observer, and the list goes on.

**M&S is who we are and what we do.
Without it, the United Church would not be. It's as simple as that.**

St. Andrew's is Over the Top for M&S

We're bucking a trend. St. Andrew's ended the year with M&S contributions of \$62,459! This was 29% over our plan! And our best year since 2000! Increased givings began in March, after the Stewardship Campaign and just kept going. Isn't it wonderful? Now, we could get puffed up and rest on our laurels, but there's a challenge ahead!

Major National Cutbacks

There has been a shortfall in M&S Fund givings nationally over the past few years. Just as in our pastoral charges, the costs to provide programs, services, and the ministry of the General Council have increased. During recent years the United Church has been using reserve funds to partially offset the effects of these increases. This is not a sustainable practice in the long term

As a result, in order to maintain a balanced budget, the Executive of the General Council approved a budget plan at their June meeting that eliminated 27 positions, many of them in the area of social justice. If givings don't improve, cuts to direct grants to our global partners, to community outreach programs in Canada, to the theological schools, and to struggling congregations will follow in 2009. Many of the current cuts are in the area of social justice.

Social Justice Includes Among Other Things:

Indian Residential Schools - Reconciliation

In the past 20 years, the United Church has begun a directed, prayerful, and concerted effort to become more informed and responsive to the harmful affects of the residential school policy.

Action on Climate Change

The United Church is deeply concerned about climate change, which is caused largely by emissions from rich countries, but the consequences of which will be suffered disproportionately by developing nations and future generations. We are calling for urgent response to its increasing global impact, especially on the poor. We participate in Climate Action Network Canada.

Resisting Empire

Mandated by the General Council, the United Church has embarked on a three-year program of church engagement and education in order to better understand and challenge the interconnected political and economic systems at work in our world today. It asserts that we can resist this empire that benefits the few at the expense of the many and transform the world through works of love and justice.

I sure don't want to see any of these cut, do you?

*Think of the Minute for Mission every Sunday:
Which work that you have read about would you cut?
This is serious stuff.*

When members learned about the cuts, they protested.

Letters poured into the General Council office from Presbyteries, Conferences and individual members. About 150 people formed a protest group called *United for Justice*. Representatives attended a General Council Executive (the Executive) meeting in November that sought a solution.

If you needed more money, why didn't you ask?

This is what a lot of people cried out. In November, the Executive decided to keep to the balanced budget, but if donations exceed \$30.2 million in 2007 (sadly, they had not by February 4), the extra money will be used to reduce the cuts.

The 3% Solution

And, they decided to ask us for more. At that November meeting the Executive decided to ask that members give 3% more to M&S in 2008 (\$31.5 million) and 2009 (\$32.5 million). This will support current work and some expansion.

The St. Andrew's Challenge

So here we are! St. Andrew's goal will be \$64,300. Most of us are pretty well off. Think about what you give: 3% more isn't much. Let's see how far above that we can soar!

We are not alone, we live in God's World.

For more about the 3% solution visit
http://www.ucobserver.org/archives/jan08_church.shtml
To really keep up on things, subscribe to *The United Church Observer*.

M& S section written by Kathy Brown. Sources: United Church Observer and United Church Website.

St. Andrew's United Church Reaches Out Into Our Community

The following pages contain brief outlines of some of the work this congregation supports in Halifax. Each was written by a different author. By necessity, the descriptions are brief, but we have attempted to give you sources of further information.

We are called . . . To love and serve others

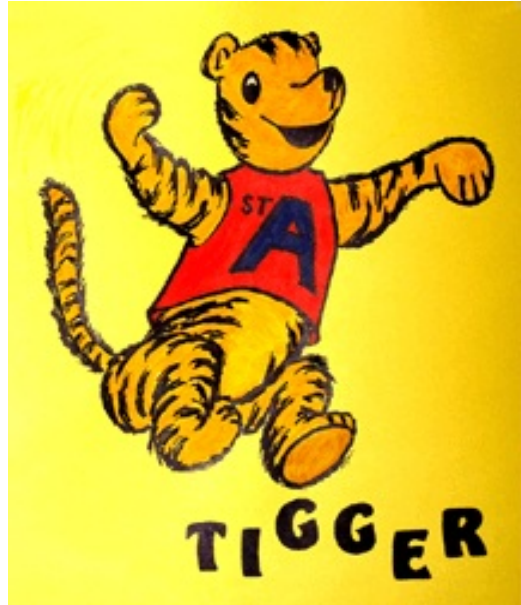
About Tigre (Task Group for the Renewal of Community Engagement)

By Pam Brown and Ross Langley

During the Jubilee Year, there was much conversation with the whole Congregation about hopes for the future of St. Andrew's. One hope that was clearly defined was to increase our Mission and Outreach activity, while honouring the amount of each that has been done by members of the Congregation over the years.

After the Jubilee Year, the Council decided to form three Task Groups to work on the objectives defined by the Congregation. One of these was "Task Group for the Renewal of Community Engagement" - a hard title to use in conversation and somehow abbreviated by a creative mind to the acronym "Tigger"

The goal of this group, approved by Council, is "To bring the Congregation to a place where it can articulate and initiate a new understanding of its Mission to the City and the World."



Here is some of What St. Andrew's is Doing Now

St. Andrew's Benevolent Fund

St. Andrew's Benevolent Fund is used to assist those less fortunate in HRM who call the church office or come in person requesting assistance. These requests are often for help with rent, heat, lights, eye glasses, or dental work. Sometimes our help means that a person can stay in their home.

St. Andrew's cooperates with Brunswick Street Mission, Bethany United, First Baptist and Parker Street Food Bank to make our dollars stretch as far as possible. Sometimes payment of the request is shared.

Joan, St. Andrew's Church Secretary, organized the secretaries of the nearby churches to meet and discuss how they could cooperate in meeting the needs of people who come to the area churches for help. The secretaries know many of the services so can direct a client to a larger, specific program.

Money going yearly into the Benevolent Fund cannot be predicted - a large portion comes from weddings, the regular Church Envelopes and half of the Christmas Offering. Those on PAR can make specific donations to the Fund.

Phoenix House

Sources: Phoenix House special report "Words of Hope From the Home Away from Homelessness" and Elizabeth Brown

Phoenix Youth Programs are celebrating a significant year - the 20th anniversary of the opening of the Phoenix Home in 1987. Since that first House, perceptive, creative and committed staff have developed new programs and refined others, always rising to the needs of the youth.



The Phoenix Vision

"We recognize the value of all youth, and strive for a world where they live with dignity, free from oppression, in a healthy, safe environment. We imagine a society where our services are no longer needed."

St. Andrew's was involved as a congregation in establishing Phoenix House. First, there were early efforts to have a home for girls which did not materialize. Later, St. Andrew's, the Presbyterian Church of St. David, First Baptist Halifax, and the Catholic Social Services Commission joined together to provide the Boy's Home on Oxford Street. In the 1980's the plight of at-risk and homeless youth was recognized and, in 1987, Phoenix House opened as a place of support, again with the support of St. Andrew's. Phoenix Programs are for those between 16 and 24 - many of whom fall between the cracks of our social safety systems

Phoenix House Provides a Host of Programmes

1. A Prevention Program to help youth stay connected with their schools and families.
2. Phoenix Youth Shelter with 20 rooms for at-risk youth.
3. A Supervised Apartment Program, a step towards independent living and self-sufficiency.
4. Phoenix Centre for Youth on Coburg Road, a shelter from the elements and place of first contact.
5. Phoenix House provides 10 individual rooms to 10 youth, who lived there while following some form of education, work, or volunteering in the community.
6. The Phoenix Learning and Employment Centre. Here a counsellor will go through interest tests, evaluations, formal assessments and possible referrals to other community programs.
7. Transition Program, an eight-week program focusing on self and career.
8. Follow- Up Program, offering ongoing support and crisis intervention to former clients.
9. Parent Support Program, to guide young people through this very important stage in their lives.

To learn more go to <http://www.phoenixyouth.ca/> a super website!

The Brunswick Street Mission

Our Partner Church

Material provided by Carole Cooley

Over many years, the community and outreach work of the Brunswick Street United Church was renowned. With a restructuring of the church and the services it provided to the community, a new structure was created to provide and enhance these services: The Brunswick Street Mission.

In the spring of 2006 a new board was created to provide direction and oversee the development of the Brunswick Street Mission. The board is composed of one member from each of the eight United Churches on the peninsula of Halifax.

St. Andrew's has been a strong supporter of The Brunswick Street Mission for many years.



The goal of the Mission is to assist individuals to become self sufficient so they can lead healthy, sustainable lives and be contributing members of the community. The success of the mission's work will be measured by the success of achieving this goal.

The mission provides the following programs and services:

1. Trustee Program (financial, social trusteeship, advocacy 160-175 served)
1. Food Bank (Providing over \$230,000 a year in food to over 20 – 35 families/week)
2. Personal and Family Crisis Management (Serving over 40 + individuals per week for all types of emergencies)
3. Clothing Center (Providing adult, child and infant clothes to over 100 people per week)
4. Breakfast Program (30 – 80 people 5 mornings per week)
5. Food not Bombs (Prepare left over food from the food bank for street people)
6. Skill building (sewing program for 6/8 participants)
7. Medical Services
8. Spiritual support

The mission also has a number of meeting rooms and a gym that is used for a number of activities and community events.

The mission budget is supported by the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church, donations and fundraising activities. St. Andrew's helps in various ways: contributing to the Food Bank through the 'Meal a Month' on the third Sunday of each month; donating good used clothing; donating hats and mitts at Christmas; and helping with the Mission Beans Fund Raiser in March and October.

St. Andrew's UCW Outreach

By Marion Anderson

St. Andrew's United Church Women provide outreach support to the local community and abroad. Monetary contributions come from funds raised at the Annual Coffee Party, while other support comes from the time and effort of individual members.

Financial donations are made to St. Andrew's Sunday Suppers and St. Andrew's Benevolent Fund. In addition, contributions are made to support Brunswick Street Christmas Fund; "Street Feat" newspaper; Atlantic Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship; Phoenix House snack program; Aboriginal Task Force; Ministry of the Deaf; and the Bible Society.



Meals are prepared and/or served for St. Andrew's Sunday Suppers, Hope Cottage and Tuesday night suppers for University students. Layette articles are contributed and sent to Brunswick Street Mission and the I.W.K. Hospital; used clothing for Brunswick Street Mission is delivered along with donated mittens, hats, scarves, etc. from the Mitten Tree. Personal showers are held for Phoenix House and, through the Salvation Army and Cloverdale, for inmates at the Halifax Correctional Centre. Memorial flowers from the church are delivered to shut-ins after Sunday services.

Further afield, financial support goes to the Angola Memorial Scholarship Fund; Christian Blind Mission; Fellowship of the Least Coin (through Canadian Women's Inter-Church Council); African Grandmothers (through the Stephen Lewis Foundation); and St. Andrew's Mission & Service Fund (through the United Church of Canada).

We are indebted to St. Andrew's staff and member of the congregation for their support of our many projects.

Tuesday Dinners

By Sarah Chapman

A typical evening at Tuesday Dinners usually begins around 5pm when University and College students from the Halifax area arrive at Saint Andrew's United and are greeted. Together they prepare the salad and cut up the cheese and bread and set the table in the Mary Holmes Room.



Wonderful main courses seem to magically arrive and are heated. Grace is said and the conversations ranging from movies to Russ's sermons, to politics, to world events and beyond begin and student bellies are in appreciation as they are fed. Bonds are made, there is a great deal of laughter and a connection happens.

After dishes are washed and put away a small worship service or prayer time is led by Martha, Russ or Kim, the Dalhousie University Chaplain. Then everyone is sent back into the land of books and late night cups of coffee.

Being one of the students to take part in this, I can say that it is one of the best young adult ministries I have ever heard of within the United Church, let alone participated in. Some of my closest friends in the city were made through Tuesday Dinners and we look forward to seeing each other at Sunday worship as well. Sometimes it can be difficult for young adults and students to find a place within a congregation that will minister to their needs. I believe that with Tuesday Dinners I am able to engage with my peers in the sharing of a meal and a time of reflection, much like Jesus did in that Upper Room.

Although the meal seems to arrive magically as it is usually dropped off in advance, the students who come regularly or stop by once in a while always appreciate the effort put into this home cooked meal and the space to engage in fellowship. Thanks to everyone who helps to make this important ministry happen.

Sunday Suppers

A group of churches cooperates to provide Sunday Dinner for the homeless and others who need it. Other places are not open for an evening meal on Sunday. St. Andrew's provides the facility for this and members of the congregation cook casseroles when it is our turn.

***We believe in God:
who works in us and others by the Spirit.
We are called . . . to love and serve others.***

Thanks to everyone for the wonderful work that we do.

The BUGLE, February, 2008.

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