

Missional Neighbourhood

Several years ago a group of parishioners took part in a two year training project for Missional Church.

The instructions we were left with was to “find out what Christ is already doing in your neighbourhood and join with it”.

We began by having several teams of people that went out into the neighbourhood weekly to simply pick up garbage and talk to any neighbours that we met. Soon people were engaging with us and even began inviting us up onto their porch to share a cool drink of water. It was a wonderful beginning. Soon the neighbourhood looked much improved, not just by our picking up garbage, but the people were taking more interest in their neighbourhood.

Before Christmas we held a traditional Christmas dinner and delivered flyers inviting our neighbours. About 50 people from the neighbourhood came, along with many fellow parishioners.

Last winter we bought warm winter boots for a man in the neighbourhood who was wearing worn out shoes with holes in them.

When a few people in the neighbourhood were interested in starting a community garden we contacted them and opened the church for meetings and worked with them on this project over the winter. Not only did the city give them approval for a garden in the neighbourhood park, but ploughed it and provided compost. We asked our parishioners for Canadian Tire money and received over \$300 worth, with which the gardeners bought equipment. Canadian Tire was so impressed with the neighbours and our generosity they supplied the group with a garden shed free of charge.

In the spring we held a Ham dinner. When it came time to open the doors the parish hall was quickly filled to capacity with neighbours. They were a happy bunch and it was obvious they were really beginning to feel welcome and comfortable here.

This Christmas we again offered a tradition Christmas Dinner. People in the neighbourhood had been asking since late summer whether there would be a dinner. This time more than 150 of our neighbours arrived, at least 3 times as many as last year.

Again we are working together over the winter on plans for the garden and an expansion.

There are also plans in the works for forming a “Neighbourhood Association”. We have again offered space and will join with them in helping make this happen.

We continue to watch and are amazed at what Christ is already doing in our neighbourhood and are taking every opportunity to join with them.