

Helping others

In Matthew's gospel, we read: "What you do to the least of my sisters and brothers, you have done to me." This invitation of Jesus to reach out to those in need and work to overcome injustice is a hallmark of Robertson-Wesley (R-W). In various ways we put this message of Jesus into action - with our hands, our pocketbooks and our hearts.

Our History

The congregations of both Robertson and Wesley had long histories of outreach work. With women like Nellie McClung as members, it's no wonder helping others is in our blood. Each generation has rallied around a concern, be it women's suffrage, helping refugees, or advocating for the poor. The work of R-W Outreach has been funded by congregational and community donations, fundraisers, and the proceeds from established church trust funds.

Outreach remains a special passion of our congregation. R-W is located within a diverse community, providing us with unique opportunities to serve and to share. We also seek to meet needs of the broader global community.



Community Dinner

Responding to a growing need in our neighbourhood, R-W started the Community Dinner program in 1997. Once a month, 100 to 150 people are welcomed to Memorial Hall for a free hot dinner, often accompanied by entertainment. We alternate with Christ Church Anglican to ensure there is a hot meal twice a month. Each church hosts a special Christmas dinner in early December. Volunteers plan, purchase, prepare and serve food, and clean up afterwards. A volunteer sign-up sheet is maintained in Memorial Hall and necessary funding is raised through bake sales and other donations.

Food Bank Depot

In the '80s, with a sharp downturn in the Edmonton economy, the need for a food bank became apparent. A present member of R-W is a founding member of the Edmonton Food Bank, Canada's first. It is thus no surprise that R-W has been a food bank depot for over 20 years. Volunteers operate the morning phone-in service, unload the truck, confirm ID, distribute food, as well as socialize with and welcome clients.



Magic Pantry

As a church in the diverse Oliver community (on the fringe of the inner city), we often encounter the hungry at our door. Typically these people are unable to access the services of the Food Bank. In response to this need, we established the Magic Pantry, a unique program providing a nutritious, portable ready-to-eat lunch.

Inner City Partnerships

Operation Friendship is a program ensuring that difficult-to-house inner city seniors are fed hot lunches and provided a space for gathering and conversation. We provide money, food and servers for four hot meals at McCauley Seniors' Drop-In Centre each June through September.

Robertson-Wesley has also had a long involvement with the **Bissell Centre**, where many in our congregation work as volunteers in various capacities. Each year, volunteers make hundreds of sandwiches to help the Bissell Centre meet its growing demand for food. In addition, we participate in the **Inner-City Pastoral Ministry**, providing lunches and serving at some of the Sunday services.



Choral Morphosis

We are excited to be involved with Choral Morphosis, a choir for developmentally challenged adults. The program offers fellowship, companionship, and the opportunity to create and express. R-W assists by providing funding, leadership, and a home for the choir.

Refugees

In the late 1970s, Vietnamese refugees began pouring into Canada. In response, R-W sponsored the first of our refugee families, working hard to raise money and help them rebuild their lives. In the intervening years, we have sponsored and assisted people from a number of countries, including Kosovo and Somalia. In recent years, more delays and difficulties have made sponsorship challenging. Nevertheless, in 2013, we had success in co-sponsoring a young Somali man. We continue to respond to and assess requests, and are open to new sponsorships, either alone or in partnership with others.



Getting Involved ...

Reaching out requires new ideas and new energy. There are many ways to get involved. One way is to participate as a member of our Outreach Committee. We meet at 9:00 a.m. on the first Sunday of each month to maintain our long-term projects, and develop and discuss new ones. Our Mission and Outreach Pod provides another avenue of participation, for those preferring a more informal involvement. The Pod, which meets periodically, allows participants to suggest and develop creative ways of doing Outreach. There are sign-up sheets in Memorial Hall for project-oriented tasks.

Further information about Robertson-Wesley Outreach can be found on our website (www.rwuc.org) or by calling the church office at 780-482-1587.

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Outreach

