

St. Basil's Parish

Social Action Committee Program

St. Basil's parish maintains an active Social Action program in support of community outreach programs in our neighbourhood. These include a Food Cupboard and Christmas Exchange Program, participation in key neighborhood chaplaincies and outreach activities as well as financial support for a dozen community charities that include Harmony House, Interval House, Ottawa Mission, Ottawa Salus Corporation, Ottawa West End Community Support, Shepherds of Good Hope, St. Brigit's Summer Camp, St. Joe's Women's Centre, Waupoos Foundation, Youville Centre, Carlington Community Chaplaincy and the West End Community Breakfast and Lunch Programs.

The Food Cupboard Program is managed by Michael and Michelle Gleason who monitor the food line on a daily basis and work cooperatively with team leads and volunteer drivers in support of clients in our community. The volunteer drivers prepare food packages and undertake deliveries to approximately 12 clients per month.

The Food Pantry also supports the Caldwell Community Centre, the Pinecrest Breakfast Program, the Youville Centre, the Shepherds of Good Hope and other food banks.

The 2015 **Christmas Hamper Campaign** resulted in the provision of assistance to 136 individuals, including 52 children. Our congregation was active in all aspects of the program including monetary donations, the purchase of Christmas gifts for children, the collection of food contributions and finally, the preparation and delivery of Christmas parcels to recipients in our community. One recipient family with two children sent the parish a thank you card that underline the importance of this type of program: "I am reminded every year how wonderful, caring and loving God's children can be. You always remember us and go above and beyond to help us. One day my family and I will be in a position to do to others as you have done for us. And when that day comes, I will always remember your generosity and the joy it brought us. You gave myself and my family more than material things. You gave us faith. That is more than money can buy. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts."

"The Carlington Community Chaplaincy is a Ministry of presence fostering a safe, supportive and empowering environment for everyone in our diverse community. We honour and value all people." The Chaplaincy programs include: a daily Open Door Drop-in Centre; a Creative Path Arts Program (guitar and piano lessons); African drumming; the Caldwell Creative Café; Music/talent nights; the Cornerstone Mentoring Program; the Rainbow Weavers Women's Group; and, the Family to Family Outreach Program. Recently Carlington hosted the annual Poverty Workshop at which Imam Sami Metwally, of the Ottawa Muslim Association, spoke on the subject of Interfaith Cooperation in responding to the needs of those living with poverty.

Kathy Czerny is currently our parish representative and the liaison between St. Basil's and the Carlington Community Chaplaincy. The role of the parish representative is to foster cooperation with other member churches in support of the Chaplaincy and to keep the parish informed of programs and activities. The

Chaplaincy has staff and a chaplain. The boundaries of the area are Carling Avenue to the North, Maitland/Clyde to the West, Baseline to the South and Fisher in the East.

The Chaplaincy holds two main fundraising activities each year: a dinner in the fall and a spring concert. This past fall St. Basil's welcomed the Rainbow Weavers Women's group to hold a craft and bake sale in the narthex. This was a very successful event both monetarily and socially and we look forward to welcoming them back this coming fall.

The Chaplaincy is always looking for volunteers for various programs. If you are interested in helping this community, please contact Kathy Czerny at kzerny@sympatico.ca

For more information, see: www.carlingtonchaplaincy.com

The Ottawa West End Interfaith Social Action Committee (OWIF), exists to assist low income individuals and families, especially children, who live in our vicinity. The Committee is made up of representatives from churches and faith groups from Carlington/Caldwell to Pinecrest/Queensway to Bells Corners. The Committee receives reports from a number of organizations serving low income communities, including Community Houses in subsidized housing areas, breakfast and lunch programs, and local food banks. The member churches then try to respond to the most urgent needs by providing assistance to the extent they can, including financial support, the supply of volunteers, and material goods such as furniture, craft and knitting supplies.

St Basil's has been a strong supporter of the breakfast programs for many years, by providing needed money to purchase food beyond what is received from the Ottawa Food Bank. Occasional requests are passed on to parishioners from time to time. At present, for example, there is a need for a sewing machine and supplies.

The Committee also provides an arena for the sharing of ideas and procedures among the member churches, such as how each church operates its Christmas hamper program, and how to share excess food among local food banks.

St. Basil's representative on OWIF is Susan Wheatly. As a retired Public Health Nutritionist, Susan is able to make nutrition suggestions for the food banks and breakfast programs. A back-up representative would be welcome. If interested, please contact Susan at susan.wheatley@gmail.com or the parish office.

St. Basil's parishioners support Social Action initiatives through their contributions in the yellow collection envelopes. Your continued support of these programs is greatly appreciated.