



Summer 2010

# The LIGHTHOUSE

Helping People | Changing Lives

## A New Partnership

Zion Alliance Church in Markham came to The Lighthouse last year looking for our expertise. They wanted to reach out to their neighborhood in new ways, but were not sure where to begin. Rita Wong, who has lots of experience accessing community needs and providing programs, met with them and they explored ways to bring the community into the church outside of traditional church activities.

Rita now spends Tuesdays in Markham where with the help of about 7 volunteers she coordinates a dancersize and a cooking class. About 20 women, mostly stay at home moms and some grandmothers, come each week to exercise, socialize and learn new skills. Some of these women have been here for a number of years; others are very new immigrants. The church has become a place where they can find friendship and support.

The cooking class includes nutritional information as the women prepare recipes from many different cultures using healthy food. And, of course, there is always the joy of eating together!

In addition, Rita has plans to offer Saturday workshops for the community. Alex Chan, one of our Board members, conducted a workshop on the Canadian tax system. It is-



not difficult for most of us to imagine that for people new to Canada our system can be very perplexing. Rita intends to organize more workshops, maybe on gardening and buying a second-hand car.

Rita is also available for individual help with personal challenges or settlement issues.

This has been set up as a one year pilot project. Rita says that in time the plan is that she can move on and the people of the church will be able to continue the program. Rita had thought that a summer break was in order, but the participants are anxious to keep meeting!



## Thanks To.....

Trudy Ormel and Diane Praamsma and Nel Smele who have retired from our Board of Directors.

Thanks for your faithful service to The Lighthouse.

## Welcome to.....

New Board members Jennifer Glass and Patricia Rodriguez and Roger Visser.

# A Reflection of The Lighthouse

By: Hope Wheatley  
Student Intern

The Lighthouse is much more than a place for refugees, non-status immigrants or otherwise. The Lighthouse is a place where people can build strong relationships and make a change for the better in a country that can leave you feeling hopeless, helpless, and alone. It is as its name states: a beacon; a refuge, a place for new chances and new beginnings. This is what I found during my time at the Lighthouse.

Being a student in the Family and Community Social Services program at Guelph Humber for the past two years, I have become use to its rigorous process of everyday classes and a massive workload. It is the expectation that a student in this program will take their internships just as seriously, if not more so, as they would any other job. So it was something of an adjustment coming to the Lighthouse.

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belonging somewhere  
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from who you are as a  
person"*

With its laid back environment, where things are taken in stride, it is impossible to feel overwhelmed or frustrated working here. It was also an adjustment coming to intern somewhere that didn't expect me to have something done by the end of the day. It was more so on my own schedule, which was nice and a

needed change, allowing me to experience a less pres-

sured transition into the Lighthouse environment.

Working as a student intern has given me a chance to try my hand at different things, some of which I would have never done in my life otherwise.

I taught an ESL class to the women of the Vietnamese group. The women are an exciting bunch, always interested in learning something new that they would have normally not been given a chance to explore in a normal classroom. Working with clients that attend the food bank has given me a greater appreciation for what I have. It's also given me a great appreciation for what it takes to run the food bank on day-to-day basis. So, to our unsung hero Janet, I take my hat off to you. I had never heard of the Christian Reformed Church until I came to The Lighthouse. Here I was given the chance to attend a meeting with members of the CRC. It was meant to provide a new means of reaching the Toronto community. It was an excellent eye-opener and learning opportunity.

It was these open-minded ideals that allowed me to gain new experiences and learn things not just about myself, but about the community which The Lighthouse serves, as well as the ministries it uses to reach it. One would have to be mentally, physically, spiritually, and emotionally blind not to see the core ideal that The Lighthouse brings to the table: **community**. It may not be written on the mission statement, but it's what clients and workers experience when they come into this environment. It's a feeling of belonging somewhere that doesn't take away from who you are as a person, but rather embraces these differences and gives you a chance to share them with the people around. It's an opportunity for intern students to get their feet wet in something they may not have thought about.



Manicure Class Learns From Volunteer Instructor Olga Thanks Olga



## **ANNIVERSARY GIFT**

By Diane Praamsma

When Thea and John Krul of Holland Christian Homes in Brampton celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary recently they both knew that they didn't really need flowers or gifts. So, after talking it over with their daughter, they decided instead to word their invitation to the celebration as follows: "Best Wishes only, and a donation to The Lighthouse would be appreciated."

Their next step was to contact Janet Elliott at The Lighthouse. Of course she was thrilled at the idea and right

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away sent the Kruls a poster, brochures, and envelopes and appropriate enclosures that indicated tax receipts would be issued in the new year for all donations!

John, a retired carpenter by trade, made a wooden box with a slot where people could deposit their envelopes and/or cash. When I

asked Thea if it had been a lot of trouble, she replied, "No, not at all. Janet provided us with everything necessary, and we had only positive reactions from our guests."

It was a real pleasure for me to go to the Kruls later, and visit with them as I picked up the donations. Altogether they amounted to \$ 699!

Perhaps more of you out there would like to follow John and Thea's fine example! What a wonderful way to combine thankfulness with a fund-raiser for a good cause!



**Graduation  
Day For  
The  
Haircutting  
and  
Manicure  
Classes**

**Thanks to Maria  
Volunteer Haircutting  
Instructor**



# From the Desk of Rob

At its Annual Synod, The Christian Reformed Church of North America adopted the report "Migration of Workers" on how the church should respond to migrant workers. As I read this report, I was excited to see that it focused on biblical principles from both the Old and New Testament that speak of the church's need to reach both status and non-status immigrants. It encourages churches to find approaches to welcome people who are strangers in their community and looking to be members. This approved report states that the Christian Reformed Church including all its local churches and agencies are **instructed and encouraged to be inclusive and compassionate for this vulnerable population while working to educate ourselves and advocate as needed.** We need to actively welcome and include our migrant brothers and sisters in Christ.

As part of this report, there are stories from individuals sharing their experience with the Canadian immigration process. Along with these stories, The Lighthouse also shared some of the work it does with refugees and immigrants.

Over the years, The Lighthouse has worked with the Hispanic, Chinese and Vietnamese communities, helping refugees from these communities integrate and feel at home in the Canadian society. We continue this work today, demonstrating God's love, compassion and mercy.

With your continued support, we can work together to help those who come as refugees looking for assistance at The Lighthouse. We can also help churches learn how to develop relationships with refugees, immigrants and newcomers.

*Support the work of The Lighthouse as it demonstrates God's love to the vulnerable, needy, displaced, and marginalized.*

(To read this report go to <http://crcna.org/site/uploads/uploads/resources/synodical/migration.pdf> )

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## Helping People Changing Lives

*Thank you for being partners with us in this ministry.*



Yes, I would like to help with a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ Visa/Mastercard # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry . \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Code \_\_\_\_\_

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- ☐ United Way Payroll Deduction-just provide our CRA # and address
- ☐ Matched Corporate Giving-many companies match employee donations
- ☐ Monthly Visa or Mastercard donation-makes it easy for you and for us
- ☐ Giving through Christian Stewardship Service
- ☐ Canada Helps on line at [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org)
- ☐ PAR PreAuthorized Remittance

Please Mail Your Contribution  
To:

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*Receipts will be issued in the New Year Canada Revenue Agency #13036 3740 RR0001*