



Welcome To The Lighthouse

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.
- Romans 15:7 (NRSV)

Below are some client stories as told to our student intern, Cameron. He asked food bank clients two questions:

- What information would you like to share in regards to what has brought you to The Lighthouse today to use the food bank?
- What are your plans for the future?

George

I was living on the street six months ago, and a friend named Kevin told me there was a room available where he is living at Ossington and Davenport. I said I couldn't afford it because I'm only working 2 or 3 days a month, but the landlord let me come in before I was on social assistance. I was there 2 or 3 weeks before I got my first paycheck. As I said, it was my friend Kevin who told me about the place where I'm living now, he also told me about The Lighthouse. He just hurt his back last week when he slipped on the ground, so he is out of commission for a while and I'm helping him out now until he get's back on his feet. He helped me, so now I'm helping him out. I appreciate the help that The Lighthouse is providing me with right now, and if I ever win the lottery I will remember you guys and pay you guy's back!... but don't hold your breath!

Jules

Well, I've been out of work for going on three years, so I had some savings and I had to exhaust those and cash in my life insurance before I could get on OW (Ontario Works commonly known as social assistance). It's just not enough to cover my bills, so I called the Daily Bread and they sent me here. I've been coming here for about a year and a half. I was working in software and your skills get old real fast. Then I was working as a courier, but I had a couple of accidents, so my insurance went up and I couldn't afford to pay for it anymore. I'm lucky because I live in a co-op, so I'm only paying \$65. But, yeah- this is one of the best food banks I have ever been to, you guys have meat and fresh vegetables.

Food Bank Tidbits

- 6450 people received food help from our food bank in 2010
- 13 volunteers make this program possible- they:
 - unload trucks
 - stock shelves
 - package food
 - distribute food
 - sort produce
 - engage with those we serve

I'm looking for work now. What a single person gets with OW- it's not a lot. Between OHIP, OW and The Lighthouse I get what I need, though.

Jennifer

I've been coming here since my husband got carbon monoxide poisoning. He was a master craftsman and the accident happened on the job. This is the best food bank that I've come to; I think all food banks should be organized like this. I went to another food bank, and they only gave me two small bags of food for me and all of my children- so I left. What I love is that Janet doesn't judge anyone here. At other places they are not well organized and very judgmental. This is a helpful and caring place. They have a billboard of information for jobs and where to go for help. That doesn't happen at other food banks. Even when people are out of the area you guy's

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help them out; other food banks don't do that. Without The Lighthouse I wouldn't be here now.

I plan on getting a job with The Toronto School Board. I have a lot of experience working with children who have special needs. The kids are our future, and I'm very proud as a mom. (Jennifer is the mother of five.)

Maria

I came to Canada from Colombia to work as a nanny. Later I sponsored my husband who immediately started going to school to improve his English, which he did with great determination and in record time. He then joined a co-op program to help him find work in his profession of computer engineering. He is now on an unpaid work placement in his field, and we are keeping our fingers crossed that he finds work in the job that he enjoys.

I am hoping that once my husband is working, I too can return to school in my area of study, international business management. (Maria and her husband have two young daughters and need our food bank help as they transition to a new life in Toronto.)

Jose

I need food. I go without food for long periods of time for my entire life. I am on a fixed income, a disability pension. I've been through a lot of hardship, a lot of suffering. I've always been undernourished. I come from a poor part of Portugal, where my dad was a fisherman. I have always gone without food. I can't read or write. It makes it hard to find work. I've had to work manual labor. I've tried going to adult learning centers, but English is my second language, so it is hard. I've been on disability for a while. When I first got on disability I did gardening part time; and I would go to a building and do cleaning.

I would like to move to a nicer part of the city, to a nicer apartment, a different place, where I can have a better life. I am very thankful for The Lighthouse, for the volunteers, for the staff; they're all very nice; that's what I really like about the Lighthouse. This is one of the better food banks in Toronto, because you make me feel comfortable; that's the big thing. I've been around since the Lighthouse first opened, when it was a place for youth-to help kids out of trouble and all that.

The main thing is that I'm a psychiatric patient, but I want to get back to work in the future once I'm healthy.

PAR is Advantageous

The Lighthouse continues to have challenges in reaching its financial goals. You can help us with monthly giving through PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) which is a "direct debit" program that allows you to give through an automatic monthly withdrawal from your bank account.

PAR is giving, made easy. You just provide The Lighthouse with your bank info and your monthly giving amount, and the rest is automatic. No more cheques. No more fees. Of course, you may cancel or change either the amount of your monthly gift or other information at any time.

PAR is advantageous:

- It provides an opportunity to give faithfully
- It provides regular, dependable flow of contributions
- It reduces bank fees for The Lighthouse.

For more information concerning the PAR program, please contact The Lighthouse at 416-535-6262 or rob@lighthousecentre.ca.



*Welcome
New Board Member*

*Paul Casinathan, a member of
Grace CRC Scarborough, pictured
here with Samia Saad at our Board
and Staff visioning day in January.*

*New Board Members Always Welcome
Could This Be Part of Your Ministry?*

Lighthouse Satellite Programs in Markham and Scarborough



**Christmas
Feast For All To
Share**

**Weekly
Women's
Support
Group**

**Members Of The
ESL Class In
Scarborough
Enjoy A Christmas
Meal And Good
Company**



Welcome Cameron

I am Cameron Turner, a second year student majoring in social work at The University of Guelph-Humber. As a part of my studies I am to complete 1000 hours of practical experience in the field of social service work. The Lighthouse is my first of three placements that I will complete upon graduation. At The Lighthouse I help out with the food bank in terms of intake and am currently working on a grant proposal for a leadership training internship program for newcomers to Canada for The Lighthouse. I am enjoying my time here as I get the chance to work daily with the amazing staff and the clients that they serve. It is a very fulfilling and eye opening experience, as I am allowed the opportunity to work with the clients of The Lighthouse who are so very grateful for the services that we provide. It is an experience that I will cherish for the rest of my life.



**Our Annual Income Tax Clinics For Low
Income People Are Underway
Thanks To Our Wonderful Volunteers!**

From the Desk of Rob

The Lighthouse has partnered with Ride for Refuge in 2011 to help raise funds. The Ride for Refuge is a tangible way for you to engage with the work of The Lighthouse. It is a way to personally connect to people's hurt and pain as well as actively engage in improving their lives. We need your help to make this a success!

The Ride for Refuge offers organizations like The Lighthouse innovative ways to raise funds. It partners with us to provide resources that support our programs including: refugee and immigrant settlement assistance, counselling, ESL classes, referrals to other agencies, food bank and programs that break social isolation and provide people with new skills and information.

The Ride for Refuge is hosted in many communities across Canada and the United States. Most riders who participate in the ride cycle between 25-50 kilometers. This year I will be leading a team and encourage you to take this challenge too. It is a fun meaningful way to support the work of The Lighthouse.

The goal for The Lighthouse is to have 15 teams ride to raise a minimum of \$30,000. I have set a personal goal of \$5,000 for my team. You can be part of this very exciting new initiative by joining my team or forming your own. Together we can make a difference!

Feel free to contact me any time to brainstorm, to learn more about the Ride, find a team or tell me your plans: 416-535-6363 or rob@lighthousecentre.ca or check www.rideforrefuge.org.

Let's Ride for Refuge together!

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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 \$ _____

Cheque Enclosed

Visa/Mastercard # _____ Expiry . _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ PC _____

Other Ways to Help-Contact us for details

- 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
- PAR PreAuthorized Remittance

Please Mail Your Contribution
To:

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