

COVID 19 & COMMUNITY MINISTRIES Zoom Conversation Chat Box details March 18, 2020

People involved in Community Ministries in Shining Waters Regional Council were invited to gather for a Zoom Conversation for the purpose of checking in as well as sharing decisions, resources and questions. It was good to be together to feel the support of others who are also faced with the difficult decisions about how to best respond to some of the most vulnerable people in our neighbourhoods while still taking into consideration the well-being of all. Below are key notes that come from the chat box. The notes provide info about people you might want to connect with for support or to provide info to as well as provide a glimpse into the ways communities are responding.

We are planning to meet again in two weeks on Wednesday April 1 at 7 pm at zoom link: <https://united-church.zoom.us/j/299029981> or Find your local number: <https://united-church.zoom.us/u/abPlecBGt3> then enter meeting ID: 299 029 981. We have shifted from an afternoon to an evening call to better accommodate schedules of some of the people who could not be on.

WHO WAS ON THE CALL

Dyanne Marlok from Palgrave U.C.

Susan Eagle Grace, Barrie

Diane Lansing United in Toronto. Food Bank, Community Kitchen, Nearly New Shop.

Gail Birchcliff Bluffs United Church and the Bluffs Food Bank that operates out of BBUC.

Heather Miller, Cummer Avenue UC. We host a weekly Drop-Inn on Wednesday. Unfortunately, now suspended...

Karen Hilfman Millson Shining Waters Regional Staff supporting Community Ministries

Kristin Philipson, Rosedale United Church, supporting Wendy Dryden who is the Chair of our Social Ministries Council, she oversees our Clothing Bank at Wychwood

Tina Conlon - Community Minister at Davenport Perth Community Ministry. More like able topping to people where they can get food. Just put Bread and Bricks and Pelham [Recovery] Rocks on hold.

Lang Moffat Weston King Neighbourhood Centre

Jeffrey Dale Youth Minister for Shining Waters Region and Grace United Church in Barrie

Wendy Dryden - Rosedale United - Chair, Social Ministries Council.

Marlene Limpricht Coldwater UC

Sylvia Cohen from Humber Valley in Etobicoke

RESOURCES / DECISIONS / INFORMATION / QUESTIONS

Cummer Avenue UC – Heather, this morning we gave out \$ Tim's cards. Last count I had was about people, but I suspect a few more showed up after that. Tried to get \$ PC cards last week, but local stores all sold out. Diane - maybe we can connect and figure out a way to pool resources in the local neighbourhood.

Tina Conlon and, getting REALLY creative, a woman named Catherine hosts a minute gratitude choir at am every day. It's people all over the city speaking their gratitudes at the same time. You can dial-in on your phone, or videoconference. <https://zoom.us/j/> Meeting ID or # + meeting ID

Dyanne Marlok Ministry leaders from Caledon have been meeting every few months with Caledon Community Services. Congregants asking about how to donate, they want to help.

Tina Conlon Official COVID- information portals

<https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid/> - Toronto

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/-/novel-coronavirus> - Ontario

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-.html-feds>

Marlene Limpricht Our minister is emailing out her sermons, our food bank is ongoing. We are emergency so they can only access us once a month

Sylvia Cohen at Humber Valley U C we have been phoning our vulnerable seniors to provide support and ask if they need anything. Questions about sending them prepared food because of possible contamination by people making the meals.

Kristin Philipson we did the same at RUC...that was a difficult decision

Wendy - Rosedale - Sanctuary Toronto contact is Sam Sundar-Singh at sams@sanctuarytoronto.ca. There will be a shortage of beds in Toronto because of the OOTC closure. North Toronto Cluster churches (ESG, Fairlawn, Lawrence Park, and Rosedale) are about to send out communications to our congregations to collect used sleeping bags and tents to fill this gap.

Tina Conlon how do we get Zoom access to organize some of our local meetings?

Kristin Philipson Sign up for Zoom at www.zoom.us. It's really easy. Just go to that website.

Karen Hilfman Millson – check out www.ShiningWatersRegionalCouncil.ca go to programs for lots of background info on Zoom. Also watch for an opportunity to learn about Zoom through a Zoom gathering with staff coming soon

Karen Hilfman Millson KHilfman@unitedchurch.ca if you have info to share

Tina Conlon Can we endorse the street nurse's letter as I am including a link to below?

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/FAIpQLSfRflfSvVBcDPAWKrtbHpqDfoUQAooARsedDOrosQ/viewform>

Jeffrey Dale Yes, I agree, with you Tina, this letter is good to endorse, if any of you are on Twitter, I would encourage you to follow Joe Cressy's Twitter or his Facebook, as the Chair of Public Health he seems to be one of the better people putting out updates - especially around the harm reduction that was mentioned in the letter.

Kristin Philipson The street nurse letter is fantastic! Yes, we should endorse.

Tina Conlon Great work at Weston Mount Dennis, Lang!

Gail Since collectives are problematic in terms of offering services, we are encouraging folks to reach out to their vulnerable neighbours to offer support.

Kristin Philipson I am most concerned about the vulnerable homeless, those with precarious income and food shortage. I feel like our community at Rosedale United will be good about checking in with each other and supporting each other, but it's the homeless I worry about, especially with so much of our outreach having to shut down.

Gail this is a huge dilemma!

Diane is there the possibility that the city will close foodbanks, and if so, what then? or that we will not have enough food to meet the demand

Susan Eagle thanks everyone for the sharing of concerns. I am sorry I have to leave the meeting. I look forward to getting the notes.

Sylvia Cohen I will let everyone at Humber Valley know about the info and links available on the Shining Waters website.

Diane A \$10 food card doesn't go far, but we do not have the resources to offer more. Are funds available through other agencies?

Karen Hilfman Millson Do we want to set up a Facebook to keep sharing info? Do we want to set up a time for conversation on maybe a bi-weekly basis?

Diane Facebook page sounds like a good idea. We could also share best practices for safe outreach.

Karen Hilfman Millson agreed we would share best practices and information via Shining Waters Regional Council Facebook page.

Karen Hilfman Millson agreed that meeting once every two weeks would be good unless something significantly new is emerging – let me know if you want to meet sooner.

Jeffrey Dale jdale@united-church.ca (is working on the development of response from faith perspective – so what do you need?)

A sample of one way people can help from home (what other options are out there?)

INFO FROM WENDY ON JACK.ORG on opportunity to be trained for texting support for Kids Help Phone (contact info for Wendy Dryden: Mobile: 647-518-8012; Email: wldryden@icloud.com)

Wendy's email:

I'm sending you this message because you either know all the young people in our congregation or have family members 18+ who might be looking for a potential way to use some of their time safely to help other young people during these extraordinary times.

I imagine all of you may have heard of jack.org or The Jack Project over the past few years and the work they are doing with young people to address mental health issues. Eric Windeler, the founder, was one of my classmates at Queen's.

His most recent email on Friday includes an opportunity for young people 18+ to obtain training to reinforce kidshelphone text support to young people anxious about the current situation.

Please read the section "We also feel this is a time for the sector to come together..." for more details about this opportunity. See below:

We also feel this is a time for the sector to come together. We are all in uncharted territory with COVID-19, and our friends at Kids Help Phone are looking for our help. To that end, we are supporting them to encourage anyone to become a volunteer Crisis Responder for their 24/7 texting support service: **Crisis Text Line powered by Kids Help Phone**. As of yesterday, they saw an 80% surge in youth distress around COVID-19, and this is expected to continue to grow exponentially. We want to help. They are now accepting applications for an expedited training starting next week. Any person aged 18+ that wants to get involved can find out more and volunteer [here](#). Please feel free to share this with anyone you think may be interested.

AN EMAIL THAT YOU MIGHT FIND HELPFUL as you develop strategies in response to Covid19. It is from Tina Conlon. It shares details of how Davenport Perth Community Ministries is responding.

Subject: In times like these, vulnerable community members need our support the most

Dear Friends,

Yesterday, I received this e-mail from DPNCHC where DPCM and DPUC share space:

Activating our Pandemic Illness Plan means that all group programming will be closed as of Friday, March 13, 2020. These programs include EarlyOn, Seniors', Community Dining, Literacy, Children and Youth, EdgeWest and Adult Services. The Community Health Centre will stay open however, they will cancel routine health care appointment and focus on people with chronic illness and prenatal clients.

On the Neighbourhood Centre side we will provide take away food for dining clients, counselling by phone and checking in on vulnerable clients. We are also considering what health promotion activities we can do to keep our community safe especially people who may not have access to hand sanitizer and other cleaning materials.

Councillor Wong-Tam wrote, "We are only as healthy as our most vulnerable residents, and our responsibility as a community and a city include recognizing the additional challenges COVID-19 could have on our most vulnerable populations who might not have access to housing or regular access to soap and water, those experiencing homelessness and living in our shelters, as well as our front-line workers."

Some churches in the area such as St. Anne's and Roncesvalles, where some of our own Davenport Perth community members volunteer, are continuing with their community meals as this meal is important to their guests' physical and mental well being and will continue to serve the Community Dinner until they are advised otherwise. They are asking people who are ill or at risk of infection not to volunteer and to practice improved hand hygiene in the kitchen and service area, simplifying their menu for easier

food prep, service, clean up and providing the option of take-away boxes for those who prefer not to stay to eat.

I really appreciate what The Stop sent in an e-mail:

To keep our workplace healthy throughout this period, our staff and volunteers are following stringent precautionary measures such as frequent hand washing, continually sterilizing our work environments, use of rubber gloves, and social distancing. The Stop is also providing extended, paid sick days and work-from-home arrangements to our employees.

Yet for so many of our community members, these arrangements are completely inaccessible.

To isolate yourself, you need adequate housing.

To take a sick day, you need to know you'll get to keep your job.

To stockpile food and supplies, you need to be able to afford these essentials in the first place.

In times like these, vulnerable community members need our support the most.

Davenport Perth United Church continues to provide meals on Sundays when there are limited sources for food in the area on weekends. They have always been in need of additional help for food. Now, more than ever, they are in need of money to purchase clean, "take-away" containers in addition to purchasing food.

Please donate to ...

Chi miigwech and Salaam,

Tina Conlon