



## Dateline: February 12<sup>th</sup> 2023

JC's Place Ministries' Valentines Day Sunday to the Homeless of Niagara Falls.

Valentines Day is supposed to be made up of cupids, chocolates, kisses and love, or so we are told. However, I think the true meaning of the day should be the Second Greatest Commandment, as quoted by Jesus Christ, **“Love your neighbour as yourself.”**

The planning for this special Sunday began well before the actual date, as it must in order for it to be a memorable day. Volunteers of JC's Place Ministries were working in the background to offer some love to our neighbours who live on the streets and in lower-grade motels in the City of Niagara Falls. So let me tell you of the preplanning events, and the dedication of our volunteers who worked that special day.

Weeks before the event a special volunteer who lives in Nova Scotia asked what she could contribute to the homeless program, and it was agreed she would make pillowcases from donated multi-coloured fabric. They were packed into a suitcase that just made the airline's maximum weight allowance of 70 lbs., lovingly tied with a special Valentines Card, and distributed to our motel residents. Oh, the joyful smiling faces, and words of appreciation, and “God Bless You” when they were received!

The morning of this special event, before we ever hit the road,

- ◆ Four ladies, who had graciously volunteered to learn our new system of clothes sorting and storage, arrived at the church at 11:30 and began processing the 6-7 garbage bags of clothing that had been recently donated;
- ◆ A new driver came early to assess and load the cube van with clothing for the homeless distribution that day.
- ◆ Eight teenage volunteers gathered to prepare the soup and sandwiches to be distributed;

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## **Needed Right Now !**

- **Winter Coats**
- **Winter Gloves**
- **Boots**
- **Mens Pants 28-32**
- **Ladies Pants Small**
- **Sweat Pants & Shirts**
- **Under Garments**
- **Hotel Soaps, Shampoos etc**
- **Volunteers--Call 365-880-0818**

## **Comments from the Street:**

Outside the homeless warming shelter, several men were already waiting to get in at 7:30 pm, and more were coming. When I brought in the 22 soups, one man asked me who we were. Pointing to the van, I said, "JC's Place Ministries." He yelled out, "You guys are awesome to us on the street."

On another night, Pam and I dropped off 20 sandwich bags and 20 soups at the homeless warming shelter. When we got there, 13 people were waiting in line outside in the cold, 20 minutes before the door opened. The staff again were so grateful and amazed at the number of meals we had brought. It appears they did not have anything much to offer them. As we walked to the door with the boxes, some of the homeless said, "Hey, it's JC's," and I told them that we had soup and sandwiches for them! The positive responses were amazing.

As Pam and I left, we saw scores of homeless walking toward the shelter from many different directions. Not only did we help clothe and feed 60 people today (from the vans), but now we extended it to another 20. May God get all the glory for using our hands and feet today. We have made many trusting relationships in many places in our city.

Ever feel like **A School Boy Again in Trouble?** I went through the grocery checkout,



and a lady at one of the checkout tills came over to me and said, "I want you to see me before you leave here!" When I heard that, the first thing that came to my mind was some of my school teachers who said that to me when I was up to no good. So, I went over to see her and she said, "We want to support JC's Place Ministries. Are you still doing it?" I invited her to come along on a tour one day. She handed me \$100 in gift cards, with a big hug and then she went back to her till. Everywhere we go there are gifts being showered on the Lord's ministry.

We had a great day today! Wow! Unreal experiences today:

- ◆ There were many people prayed for and shared with.
- ◆ We gave out books; the Bible Studies were a great blessing to all.
- ◆ One small girl yelled out to us, saying, "Thank you, Church!"
- ◆ Probably visited with 25 people. One man wants to come to Bible Studies; a lady wished to come to church.
- ◆ We gave out Family Day cards, bananas, water, and chocolate treats from Italy.
- ◆ Even sang Happy Birthday to one of the 3 kids staying with their mom in a small motel room--got some hugs and smiles.
- ◆ The lady staying in her car has abandon the vehicle and it has been ransacked. I hope she has moved to a safer place and is okay and doing well.
- ◆ Was told that a couple tenting near the Walmart wants to have the van stop by with lunch and clothing.
- ◆ Enjoyed a coffee with another man living in a field and had a good sharing time. He wants to serve others and also to join the Bible Study group. *Continued on Page 4*

## **Dateline**

- ◆ A ministry couple brought 7 dozen oversized muffins they had purchased at Costco and prepackaged for distribution;
- ◆ More volunteers did vehicle inspections; brought them to the church; loaded the food into the vans, and then drove our special route to meet our guests;
- ◆ We instructed new volunteers as to what to expect when fulfilling their various roles, and how to perform their duties of greeting and distributing the food to our special guests.

Promptly the road crews left in our two vehicles, loaded with the food and gifts. The afternoon was cold but sunny, so we able to enjoy a normal routine distribution without the heartaches of finding our guests with wet and frozen body parts to nurture and cloth.

What a joy to see our new driver engage and converse with our guests! He fit in like a pro; like he'd been doing this all his life, telling each one that there was a special surprise in their lunch bag (a supersized muffin!). The homeless busker, in front of the liquor store with his well-worn guitar, was warmed with the kind remarks of our new driver, also a guitar enthusiast. They talked about the different guitars each owned and the sounds they made. At the end of the visit, the grateful buskers asked if he could sing a spiritual song for us, one he had sung half an hour before. For a moment he couldn't remember the name of the song. Then it came to him, "Amazing Grace," and the busker and our driver blended their voices in a country-style rendition of that beautiful hymn.

On our team that day was a volunteer who was handicapped by the loss of the use of one arm. Have you ever set up a small folding table with only one arm? Try it some time. Can you put the lid on a takeout container of soup with one hand, all the while talking and smiling, and carrying on a conversation with our special guests? What a special skill God has given him to make up the difference, and make it all seem normal! This volunteer also had, at the start of our run, our departing prayer. With grace and calmness, he prayed for our safety, and the wisdom to know how to conduct ourselves that day.

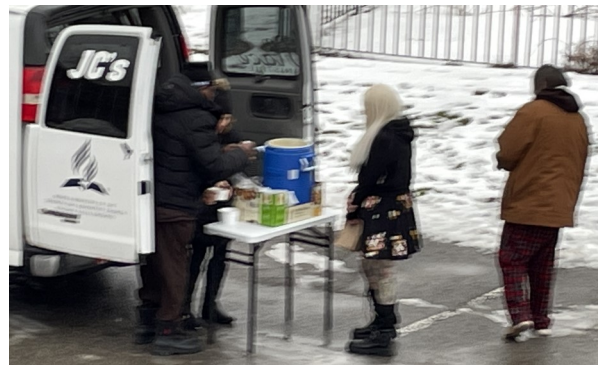
Our brand-new volunteer for serving the soup this day has a special quality of being able to make normal faces smile with joy. At our last stop, she recognized a man who had attended church with her and her husband many years ago; they'd lived in the same town. Conversations with our guests are a special time; we hate to break up the chit-chat because of time restraints. The smiles and changes in our guests' attitudes are what brings a special joy to the volunteers. After our run, she stated, "This ministry is what makes church real to us. Thank you for a wonderful day; we will need to do this again."

Our donor from Nova Scotia was unable to be with us to do the pillowcase distribution, but her sister who lives locally had a wonderful day meeting and greeting and distributing the gifts made with love from Nova Scotia. The supervisors at one of our motel stops were grateful to receive a gift each as well; we appreciate the work they do among those who have mental and social problems and need a caring and watchful eye to keep them in line. The pillowcases will also be given to some shut-ins who live alone and long for a caring word of love and hope.

**DateLine:** At the end of the day, we went to check on a homeless person living on top of a railway overpass to make sure he was alright. One of our volunteers had taken him a bag of dog food on Thursday for his 3 pet dogs. We found out he also has 4 cats he looks after. You may question that a homeless person would want to care for animals? There still is a heart of love that extends from our homeless folks to the homeless animals. This special person is motivated to take care of them by his love of life and all God's creatures. A few weeks back he showed us his left hand which had been viciously bitten by a strange dog. He needed hospital attention and a few stitches. He has healed quite a bit but his little finger is a bit stiff and, unfortunately, he has been unable to attend to his part time job.

There is one more story to tell from our special Valentines Day outing. After our visit on the top of the railway pass, low and behold, we found a man sleeping under the railway pass, so we stopped. He gladly accepted our offer of a sandwich lunch bag with the special treat, and a bowl of soup.

What a day! It was to have been a normal day, but God still had special appointments that needed to be met. Thank you all for listening and supporting JC's Place Ministries with your Love, Prayers, and Donations. ~~Carl



### ***Comments from the Street:***

Well, I hope this gives all of our readers a bit of insight into what it takes to keep the other half of JC's Place Ministries operating. The Lord can always use more volunteers and more donations. The needs are growing and the streets are not a safe, warm, comfortable place to be. God Bless you all as you "Lend a Helping Hand" to the less fortunate. As one of our volunteers recently said of his background, "There, but for the grace of God, go I." ~~John

### **Ways to Give:**

**1. Electronically . . . [Www.jcsPlace.org](http://www.jcsPlace.org)**

**2. Mail . . . JC's Place 2408 Smithville Road Smithville L0R 2A0**

**3. Phone . . . 905-975-6394 or 365-880-7229**



### **JC's Place Ministries**

a mobile ministry of the Niagara Falls Seventh-day Adventist Church

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