



## Just In Time Donations !

As I am writing this newsletter, Fall has definitely passed off the scene and Winter's in the air. We had some balmy weather during the daytime, but nighttime temperatures have become brutal. Our folks on the street have been asking for blankets, sleeping bags, gloves and boots, coats, tents and tarps, all in an attempt to keep themselves warm from the incessant cold winds and rain.



As we approached mid November, supplies on the truck were empty and so were the shelves in our storage area. Not a single pair of winter gloves, no men's winter coats or boots, no blankets left, only one sleeping bag, and we were running very low on socks. What a dilemma to be in with so many depending on the Ministry to have the warm clothing they would be needing as the temperatures dip below zero. We've been doing our best to make what we had on hand stretch as far as possible, but there just wasn't enough to go around to the many on the street in need with cold hands, cold feet and cold sleepless nights. THEN . . .

. . . while vacationing in New Hampshire, I received an email from West Lincoln Community Care to come and pick up clothing, etc. Upon returning, and making the pickup, my SUV was filled from front to back and top to bottom. What an enormous blessing to receive this material just when it is needed! Coats, blankets, tents, sleeping bags etc. Then the sorting crews got busy, putting the goods in the storage bins or directly onto the truck.



### Inside this issue . . .

**Just In Time Donations**  
.....1, 4, 5

**On The Streets**  
..... 2, 3, 6

### **Needed Right Now!**

- **[Sleeping Bags](#)**
- **[Tents & Blankets](#)**
- **[Coats & Boots](#)**
- **[Mens Pants 28-32](#)**
- **[Ladies Pants Small](#)**
- **[Sweat Pants & Shirts](#)**
- **[Under Garments](#)**
- **[Hotel Soaps, Shampoos etc](#)**
- **[Volunteers--Call 365-880-0818](#)**
- **[Donate at www.JCsPlace.org](#)**

. . . Con-

tinued on Page 4

The Christmas Season is upon us, and the weather is rapidly changing into colder, wetter and whiter, so I decided to look back to when I started to get involved with men's ministry and the homeless.

The year was 2005, George W. Bush was President, and Hurricane Katrina killed 1800 people. After participating in foreign missions for many years, I felt it was time to get involved at home in Niagara Falls. The statistics during that time indicated that 3% of a city's population created 90% of the problems. To name a few — theft, damaging property, sexual assault, drunkenness, drug usage, homelessness, poverty, and crime, and the list goes on. The Court System was plugged up from dealing with these types of cases. This news was shocking and caused me to begin to think and pray about it. After a period of deep introspection, I decided to step out in faith and begin a ministry to deal with the situation and specifically for men, who were the larger percentage of this criminal activity. My hope and aim was to help make our community healthier, safer, and more enjoyable by helping to change this statistic.

Jesus was challenged by the Pharisees for sitting with tax collectors and ungodly people. His response was that it was to their health, well being and benefit. By His association and communication to those whom the Pharisees criticized Jesus was helping.



While volunteering at the homeless shelter in Niagara Falls, I talked with and hired these men who were down and out with society, to work for me in my construction business. With the job came the opportunity to work alongside of these men, and to enquire into their past lives, and to encourage them to turn their lives around and begin to follow along on a new path. Friendship, trust, and values were shown while working hard to accomplish what needed to be finished for the day.

The value of working with and showing by example how to do the job, so it was done with professionalism and pride, enabled the building of trust and friendship. Enabled me to ask if they would be interested in attending Bible Studies one night a week.

This was my first effort in reaching out to men on a personal one-to-one basis. As I share this story of beginning, I hope in the future to share with you many stories of how working together had a successful outcome. It would take too many pages to relate all of the stories, of the changes I've seen over the years. Now it is a privilege to begin to use these skills and experiences in a new phase of JC's Place Ministries. So, look for more stories to come from the past and new stories to come in the future as the ministry is now able to help, not only to feed the hungry on the streets, but to see those who are longing for a better life, enabling them to get off the streets and become self supporting again.

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I've come to realize that so many boys (and it begins back at an early age) fell to the wayside due to single family homes, where dads were not around to positively influence their young lives, putting an enormous burden on the mothers, who now became single and needed to work. The break up of the family unit and the need for mothers to be working moms has changed our present world for the worst scenario that can be contemplated, and imagined.

In the homeless shelter, 10 men were attending the Bible Study group regularly. One night I asked the question, "How many of you grew up without a father?" To my surprise, 9 hands immediately, without hesitation, went up. Today, I am positively convinced that one of the most important things needed is mentorship based on a positive relationship, to bring men back to an understanding of their responsibilities.



Since 2005, I have witnessed amazing changes in men by having a job, decent shelter, and their self-worth restored, simply because of a trust relationship being put in place and restored. Bible studies to learn godly principles, learning respect for oneself, acknowledging there is a God, making an accountability to oneself, a partner, a family, a friend or a group, puts incentive and motivation back into a life that was bound for destruction.

I've been privileged to witness almost fifty men whose lives have been changed. Families reunited, wounded hearts and minds healed, work habits improved and restored, and a godlier character, shown in the changed lifestyle. What a change and transformation to witness in living time, one that is meaningful and permanent and visible for others to witness!

My open challenge to all men and women, in all churches today, (of all denominations, or not) is to find one person in need of a helping hand up, to show them the narrow right path, and to guide them to Jesus! Yes, it takes time and sacrifice. These are important steps for the person you are helping. As a byproduct, you will even see your own life improve and your Christian character grow.

To love is a choice, and a good one. It then requires sharing and action, to nurture the love. Everyone needs to participate in this process, or it dies. For the past several months at JC's Place Ministries, I have had the privilege to stretch out my hand, helping men find work, lodging, self respect and a better way. Taking them out for a much-needed meal, having a one-on-one honest open-hearted discussion, with a listening ear, and then gently guiding to a new path and new ways of doing things. I always ask them to tell the truth about their situation, in order to properly understand how to extend help. You cannot really and truly help someone in an untruthful situation.

Three men and counting, are now off the street this past month, working, happier, feeding themselves, supporting their new lifestyle, and their lives are moving in a positive new direction. They have been offered the opportunity to join our men's Bible study group of 15-plus men--the opportunity to discover God's principles for a fuller life, a more meaningful life, the way it was supposed to be, and the friendship of those who are already involved in the study.

## Just In Time Donations ! . . .

... continued from Page 1

. . . the phone rang again and a donor had 800 pair of socks, plus sweat pants, sweat shirts, hoodies, and winter gloves for us, all BRAND NEW. Almost \$2000.00 of donated goods to be given to those in need. What a blessing to have folks who care for those who have nothing for protection on the streets!

. . . our lady who is crocheting sleeping mats from milk and grocery bags (takes about 800 grocery bags to make a mat) called, wondering if we needed more, and we were blessed with about 20 sleeping mats, plus hats, scarves, gloves, socks etc. Another unexpected blessing. This week we were able to give out a lot of our sleeping mats.

. . a faithful donor paid to upgrading our two mobile soup pots from plastic to stainless steel. These pots cost almost \$200.00 each! Now, our two vehicles will have their own soup-serving capability for leap frogging around the city.



. . . another call came from the Knights of Columbus in Beamsville and the Catholic Women's League. They, too, wished to collect and donate more winter clothing and goods to JC's Place Ministries. I haven't been able to see this load yet as I was vacationing again. Well, you might say, how can you run a ministry if you are on vacation? The truth is, the volunteer teams that are preparing food, sorting clothing, driving and assisting on the trucks, out listening and talking with the homeless, are a dedicated bunch of volunteers who can be depended upon.

. . . there was yet another call: Could we use some Welcome Home Kits? These are Rubbermaid Totes packed with basic household items: 2 frying pans, a cookie sheet, dish soap, cutlery, a dinnerware set, sanitizer, toothpaste, shampoo and conditioner, toilet paper, pots and glasses. United Way blessed us with eight kits which will be given to those whom we are able to get off the streets and into apartment or motel accommodations. We also received women's hygiene kits. What a surprise and a blessing!



... Continued on Page 5

Beginning the fourth Sunday in October, bowls of hot soup are now included with our lunch bags. If I could only capture to share with you the smiles and thumbs-up that are received when those first spoonful of hot soup hit the hungry tummies, it would be a moment that you would not forget. Unfortunately, it is not possible to be serving the soup and lunches, or trying to find the homeless hiding in the woods, and to still be there at that exact moment to take the picture!

Our weekly runs have been challenging, knowing how much food to prepare. Some weeks we find it hard to find the crowds, especially towards the end of the month when the homeless have received their meagre cheques. And some times, like today, we run out of soup and/or lunches before we can complete the runs.

It is mind boggling to imagine leaving your comfortable bed and exchanging it for a night on the unsheltered ground or in a shop's doorway on the cold hard concrete or in a crude tarp shelter lying on the ground, in temperatures that will chill you to the bone. If you would like to experience just a little of what it is like, try sleeping on your living room floor with nothing but the cold floor or in your garage with just a thin blanket.

One aspect of the ministry that still thrills my soul is when a homeless person comes up to me after receiving an item of clothing, or a lunch and soup, and says, "Thank you for what you are doing. God bless you and keep you safe." There is still an attitude of gratitude present on the loneliest, darkest street that is heart rending to receive.



As we approach the Christmas Season, I want to first of all acknowledge the faithful, bountiful hand of God over JC's Place Ministries during 2023. Hearts have been moved and we've not lacked when found in strait places. For this we return our praise. And we do not forget you, our donors who have stood with us and who continue to support us by your goods and your dollars, and in your prayers.

I know those on the streets would like to express their gratitude as well, for your caring and heart-felt love. Thank you from the bottom of all our hearts. Thank you, and Best Wishes in the New Year 2024. ~~ Carl

At JC's Place Ministries, we have wonderful dedicated volunteers--4 teams preparing food; a team collecting and sorting clothing and other donated items; 8 teams of drivers and assistants, making the food and clothing distribution happen; a team visiting with prayer and friendship with a listening ear; and 2 teams giving Bible studies.

I pray that you all may have a joyful and peaceful Christmas with family and friends; that, during 2024, we all will give thanks to God for His many blessings to us; that this New Year all our readers might enjoy this peace and blessing we all wish for.

In Jesus Name, Amen!

**Merry Christmas!** ~~ 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  
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