



Sanctuary London, 531 Talbot St. London, Ontario, N6A 2S5

www.sanctuarylondon.com

To Sink or Swim

I grew up on Lake Huron. Summers were spent working at an ice cream parlour, fishing in the river, and going to the beach. I enjoyed the water but I never really learned how to swim.

At the age of 17, with an undertow pulling me into deeper water, I came within minutes of drowning. My legs got tired and I knew I was in trouble. My friend screamed for help. I sank to the bottom. I pushed off the bottom of the lake hoping to surface one more time for one more breath. I don't know how long we maintained that pattern. Help arrived over the crest of the waves. My friend swam to shore to get more help. I was eventually pulled from the waters.

YouTube videos and talking to others. I eventually ran two marathons. Last year I added biking.

As many of you know, Darryl and I completed a duathlon of 100 miles. The natural progression for me this year would be a triathlon. But that would involve swimming. I have not enjoyed returning to the water. If the water is a depth that is over my head, I have great fear. I struggle with simple things like putting my face under water. But I got started. After a humiliating attempt of teaching myself to swim at the Y (the lifeguard told me I had lots of enthusiasm but no skill), I signed up for a class. The first lesson was challenging. I could not swim one length of the pool. Breathing was the hardest for me. If I did not get a breath in time, my mind flashed back to Lake Huron 26 years ago.

the street had that kind of encouragement? In our continued desire to be home together with all sorts of people who are looking for home (including me), I am reminded that it is not enough to try something...we need someone to encourage us too!

So, this September 12 and 13 (Saturday and Sunday), we want to "Give it a Tri!" It will be a weekend celebration of people trying new things AND those who encourage! I will be among many people attempting my first triathlon at Lakeside (Olympic length - 1500m swimming, 40k bike, and 10k run). It's a triathlon, it's a Sanctuary party (Saturday night), it's a fundraiser! Let's Give it a Tri! ~ GC

After a few lessons, I walked away wanting to give up. A kind word of encouragement came at the right time. I came back. I tried and failed. It was humbling. I hated it. And encouragement continued. My coach. Others around me. They encouraged me. My coach worked through each element of my swim stroke. This past weekend, after half a year of lessons, I swam 1500m continuously in open (deep!) water. There at my side was my wife, son, and father in the canoe encouraging me.

What could each of us do with that kind of encouragement? Many of us struggle doing things and avoid trying those things to avoid humiliation. What if we knew that we would still be loved even if we failed? What if we all had that kind of encouragement? What if my friends on



Two years ago I began to run. I taught myself how to run using

**You can
"Give it a Tri,"
too!**

**See details
on page 3!**

The Music of Home

As an individual, I feel the most alive when I am creating music and when I am able to have a sense of meaning and purpose beyond my own self. Over the course of the past four years of my undergraduate degree, I have struggled to integrate these two passions, instead making decisions that favour one or the other: to follow my passion for music I chose to complete a Bachelor of Music degree; to pursue a sense of meaning I completed internships with churches, led small groups, and roughly a year and a half ago began coming to Sanctuary.

Sanctuary has quickly become home for me: a place where I experience belonging, love, challenges, disillusionment, support, and hope. I went in roughly expecting to experience all of these things. What I wasn't expecting to find was a community of support in which my passion for music and meaning could be integrated.

At Sanctuary, you will notice that music happens: guitars or drums are pulled from the closet after drop in on a regular basis; people of varying ability will sit at the piano before dinner on Wednesday playing various types of music; "Ebenezer" will deliver an impromptu performance of Jesus Christ Superstar to such an enthusiastic degree that for a few moments nothing else can be heard in the entire atrium.

After observing these and other occurrences, my friends and I at Sanctuary began to ask, "what role does music have in making home?" ... "what if we define the best musicians as those who inspire a variety of people to participate in creating music together?" ... "how can we model relationship and belonging through music?"

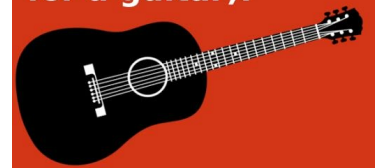
These questions have led to us starting a weekly music drop-in. The drop-in consists of guitar and drum circles, in which we say "if you come, you belong, and together we'll figure out how to make something that is enlivening for all of us." As we play new and old songs, learn from one another, and improvise together, we become family. For me, I am also finding a place in which the passions in my life that often feel conflicting are becoming united and hopefully contributing to all of us at Sanctuary finding home. ~ BL

Support a Community of Music

A \$25 monthly donation allows for ongoing instrument maintenance & repairs.

Donations of used instruments (focus on guitars & hand drums) allows the program to grow.

Or consider a one-time financial donation for new instruments (\$150 for a drum or \$400 for a guitar).



What if we define the best musicians as those who inspire a variety of people to participate in creating music together?



Love... No Matter What

It has been almost a year since I came on staff full time at Sanctuary London. I am thankful for the community that has embraced and supported myself and my family as we keep trying to find ways to help each other find home through music outside of, and within our community. I have learned through great teachings from Gil that the primary message of the gospel is to take part in Kingdom coming on earth.

*Sometimes, all we can do
is shoulder
each other's pain.*

Prior to coming on staff, I had the idea that as a community at Sanctuary we existed not only to be home for the homeless but, provide solutions to problems that people face.

Although there are some great stories of life changing experiences within the last year, most of the time we do not see change. We provide a safe place for people to find home, to feel like their story matters, to sense they are valued. Gil and Darryl also provide advice and counselling to those who request it. However, 'Jim' is still addicted to hard drugs after throwing away paraphernalia numerous times, 'Jake' still continues to pursue physical relationships to cover the pain. 'Jane' continues to lose her temper causing her to be kicked out during our drop ins.

Does this mean that we are doing something wrong?

Sometimes even though our intentions may be good, often times things stay the same or even get worse. This is an inherent reality day to day for us at Sanctuary.

Sometimes all we can do is shoulder each other's pain or continue to love when things get worse no matter what, knowing that one day Love ultimately wins. ~ JJ

What will you Tri?

For most of our friends at Sanctuary, life is full of challenges. For some it is an unsurmountable task just to get out of bed most mornings. For others it is a challenge to find a safe place to sleep each night, or something to eat each day. Some fight to stay clean, some fight for their lives.

While everyone faces major challenges at some point in their lives, for those of us who do not have street level experiences, it can be hard to relate to the people we strive to bring into the center of our community. That is why last year Gil and Darryl biked 73.8 miles and ran 26.2 miles in their 100 Miles for Home fundraiser. The idea was that they would raise money to support the work of Sanctuary while doing a major challenge to try to relate to the hardships of our friends.

This year, Gil is pushing the limit even further by adding a swim to the mix!

~ Read Gil's inspirational story on Page 1 ~

What about you? We are inviting anyone who is able and interested and looking for a challenge of their own to join us on Sunday September 13. Can you do a triathlon? Maybe you can only bike or only swim or only run. Maybe you want to do a full Olympic size triathlon, or maybe you can attempt the shorter 'Give-It-A-Tri' on Saturday the 12th. Whatever it is, we would love to have you join us!

For more information on the event itself, please check out:
<http://www.multisportcanada.com/lakeside/>

Interested? Please call Darryl for more information about registering. 519-280-8895

PARTY

Regardless of your involvement, please come and celebrate this event with us:

Sanctuary Party - **Saturday, Sept. 12, 7-10pm at 513 Talbot St Church**

Outdoor Service - **Sunday, Sept. 13, 3pm in Harris Park with Talbot St Church**



Community members Josh and James preparing dinner.

Thank You!

At our June fundraising dinner, you helped us raise just under \$10,000 for community outreach. We feel truly blessed by your generosity.

Conflict, Closed Doors, & the Pursuit of Christ in Me

Throughout history there are innumerable examples of times when God has used challenging situations to draw people closer to Himself. This is certainly true in my own life, and it is, in part, the reason why Sanctuary continues to be a place of 'home' for me.

As a result of the brokenness in our world, conflict sparks up constantly within our community. Sometimes these conflicts are imminent and violently dangerous. More often they are passive, but equally aggressive and damaging. Sometimes we know the pain that we are causing, and other times we are so damaged by our own pain or lack of mental health that we are totally unaware of how our behavior affects the people around us, often the people we love the most. But it hurts just the same.

I have found the past season at Sanctuary to be particularly pain-filled for me. More and more often I am finding myself caught up in the conflicts of others, surrounded by their pain and mine. I often feel pushed into the role of mediator. This isn't a bad thing.

As we continue to sense God gifting and developing Gil to be a teacher and visionary for Sanctuary, I am beginning to sense that perhaps God is nudging me towards being a shepherd of shepherds within the community.

Unfortunately, I find administration to be a challenge. I find fundraising to be a challenge. I find managing people a major challenge. Every day these tasks are extremely challenging. Some days I would prefer to stay in bed. It is usually on those days that I find members of our community thumping on the front door. My instincts are to avoid; to close the walls around me. Other times I jump too quickly into 'maintenance mode' where feelings are thrown out the window and things "just need to get done".

It is in the midst of these challenges that I need to be reminded that Christ is our one true mediator. He tabernacles with us through those moments of conflict, and it is in those challenges that I, like the Israelites living in slavery in Egypt, can do nothing but cry out to God and lean on His strength and understanding. Then God brings us a little closer to that place called 'home'. ~ DR



Between a Rock and a Hard Place

The greatest lesson I ever learned came from a pastor turned construction foreman, in a town called Mespo, on the site of an old church, soon-to-be new school, while visiting the oft-forgotten Caribbean island called St. Vincent. Leading a group of Canadian teenagers in developing world construction techniques, we had dug down six feet to build the foundation for the school when we came across a boulder, very much in our path and certainly in the way of the school's construction.

With the nearest reliable hospital a plane ride away, in the grueling heat, Walter, the foreman, 4 teenaged boys, and I moved a car's weight worth of stone along a narrow trench. Our tools, just planks, shovels, and pick-axes, did little to protect us from the possibility of a crushed limb. Slow and cautious, we took more than three hours to move that stone a mere 40 feet to a place where it would aid the foundation, rather than hinder it. I remember feeling so elated at the accomplishment. So proud of these young men who had conquered such an obstacle. At 26 years old, I was pretty proud of myself.

The next day, to my great dismay, we discovered another boulder of equal size standing in our path. As I was calling our team back to this daunting obstacle, Walter said, "Richard, just wait a moment." He then shattered that stone with a pick-ax, rendering it to pebbles in minutes.

I was dumbfounded. I was angry. I couldn't believe that he had risked our health and wellness when there was an easier, faster, and safer way to complete the task. I asked, "Why?" and Walter said something I will never forget. "Sometimes it is more important to know that you can get the job done." Walter, in the heat, with his own health at risk, and with a construction deadline looming, cared more about the development of 5 young men than he did about taking the easy way out. Sometimes it's more important to know that you can get the job done and sometimes it's more important to let others experience that same triumph. ~ RD



