

Dreaming BIG

The Time is Now!

Seven years ago we had a dream of opening a safe space for people to journey together. A place to call 'HOME'. The past few years have felt like we were in maintenance mode, just trying to survive with the few programs we had. The number of people in our community was growing, but our capacity to welcome these new people in fresh new ways was not. But today is a new day. It was hard to say good-bye to Jeremy, but we are greatly encouraged by the addition of our two new part-time staff Tessa and Breezey. They have been a breathe of fresh air around here, allowing us the space to dream again. So far, we have mostly just come up with more questions: are our programs accomplishing what we hoped they would? Are programs themselves the best way to achieve our goals? Who benefits most from our community?

How do we decrease the power differentials among us? How do we increase community ownership and participation in everything we do? ~DR

Housing for Everyone?

We are very thankful for the two houses we already have. Slowly these places are feeling more and more like home. But we recognize that this type of family style housing is not for everyone. In fact, most of our people may not be ready to jump into this type of situation. For this reason we are learning about other housing possibilities.

We recently heard about an organization called Indwell (indwell.ca), which does incredible work supporting individuals living in affordable apartments. Some of their buildings have housing units built above church facilities and we are beginning to wonder if this is something that could fit our community as well.....



.....24/7 available community shared space with a kitchen and TV/lounge area for when you just need to not be alone, but everyone has their own private unit for when they just need some quiet. Rooftop community gardens. Pastors and other support staff on site. These are just a few of the ideas we are thinking about. We know that the dream is huge, and expensive too! But we don't want to allow that to stop us from moving forward in the direction God is leading this community. ~DR

Getting Involved

We believe that everyone in our community has something unique and wonderful to offer!

Josh and his friend Megan have been coming on Wednesdays to provide foot care for some of our friends (pictured above left). Gail came and taught us how to make dream catchers and the meaning behind them (pictured left).

Melanie brought in some puzzles for us to enjoy together!



Thanks Jeremy!

After three years of working with Sanctuary as our worship pastor, Jeremy Jongejan has decided to move on. He will be helping his brother-in-law, who recently moved to London, start a landscaping business. We're thankful for the time we had with him and wish him all the best in his new endeavors. And we're thankful that he will continue to be part of our community, particularly on Sunday nights as he continues to help with leading worship.



TURTLES AND STARFISH

We as a staff were walking by the river on a downtown walk, talking about a makeshift shelter we had come across under the bridge. What caused the person or persons to get to this point in life? Suddenly we came across a baby snapping turtle on the bike path. Somehow it had made its way up the steep, rocky bank and up under the bridge.



Feeling compassion for the tired out fellow, and knowing his fate would likely end under a bike wheel or foot, Gil climbed back down to the river and returned him to his habitat.

One turtle saved and we, the rescuers with a sense of accomplishment.

Our conversation returned to the plight of those caught in the current of poverty, and what felt like the hopelessness of the future. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

We were reminded of the story of the man who walked down the beach. There where thousands of stranded starfish left to die from the tide. Occasionally The man would stoop down, pick up a starfish and throw it back into the water. When asked what difference he was really making, he smiled, threw one more into the ocean and said "it made a difference to that one."

I always loved that story, however within my time with Sanctuary, I've learned this perception alone is not enough. There are thousands of people living in poverty in London, and we are very good at helping one, or several. But perhaps the question that really needs to be answered is this; What are the forces that are driving poverty and homelessness in the first place? What do we need to change in our thoughts and actions towards poverty and the marginalized in our communities, our churches, our cities and our governments?

Perhaps a handout is not actually what breaks the yolk of oppression but merely soothes the thirst from the burden. What placed the burden? Who are the oppressors?

I think of the little snapping turtle and wonder about the correlation between it getting lost in the shuffle (escaping an increasingly uninhabitable river? The exhaustion that came from climbing through the man-made barriers to get to its destination?) and our friends at Sanctuary, many of whom struggle to have their voices heard and respected, who also struggle through obstacles put there by man made "progress".

Thinking of all this has turned my way of thinking about what it means to "serve the poor" upside down. And not to say the things we do out of love and compassion are meaningless. But the goal of the good news is to BREAK the chains of slavery, and it is with a holy feeling of unsettlement and discomfort we long to see justice and freedom come.

What does it look like through me, through us? ~TB



COMMUNITY FOOD FOREST

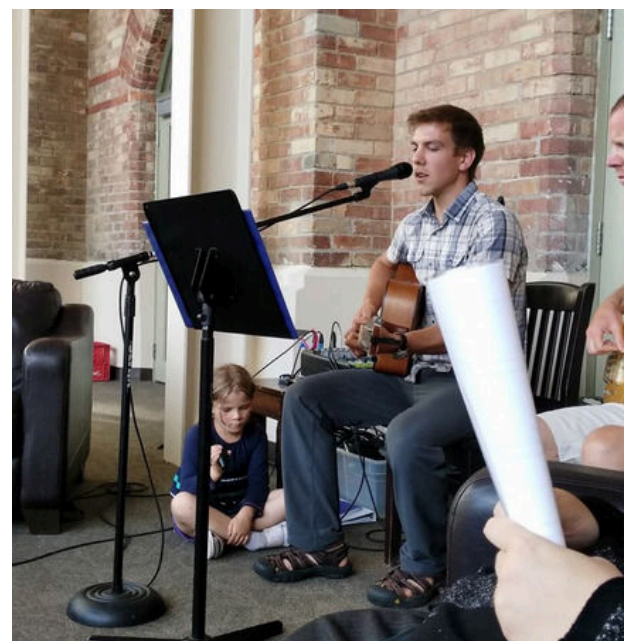
SANCTUARY HAS THOROUGHLY ENJOYED HELPING THE WEST LION FOOD FOREST COME INTO EXISTENCE. WORKING WITH FELLOW LONDONERS TO CREATE A GLEANING FOOD FOREST THAT WILL ALLOW ACCESS TO VARIOUS FRUITS, VEGETABLES, HERBS AND NUTS HAS BEEN AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO COME TOGETHER IN COMMUNITY. WE ARE EXCITED TO SEE SUCH GROWTH, NOT ONLY AMONG THE TREES AND BUSHES WE'VE PLANTED, BUT WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY AS WELL!

POWER AND LIBERATION

“It will not be so with you” - Jesus

James and John asked Jesus for positions of power and privilege in the coming Kingdom. Jesus' response is amazing. History has been filled with power and it never worked. We, my friends, are about to do something quite different. This new Kingdom will be built on service and love, vulnerability and weakness...not lording it over the others...not power but love! (My paraphrase)

At Sanctuary, we think a lot about power and privilege. For many folks who have experienced a life of poverty, they know and experience oppression daily. How can we bridge that gap at Sanctuary when so many of our symbols uphold power? I carry the keys. I get paid. I say who can come in and who has to leave...that's a lot of power! The very fact that I work for an institution that works “with the poor” leaves me in a position of power and the ones who attend are in a position of weakness. Yes, we bridge the gap with friendship, time, and love. But the gap still exists in the structure. So, we are looking to re-structure who we are...we're just not sure how to get there yet. We are seeking the wisdom of others who live out Liberation daily. And we ask for your prayers and support as we do this...if Jesus said that the Kingdom should not be about power and privilege, that is the direction we must go. ~GC



This evening I was mesmerized by the fireflies that glittered through my backyard. There's something so incredible about these tiny creatures that give off little sparks of light. It reminded me of when I was young and, similarly to wishing on a shooting star or the first star of the night, we would make wishes on fireflies. A silly ritual if you think about it however as children, we didn't need logic, nor did we subscribe to the world's crushingly pessimistic views. To simply dream was enough. Some days it's nice to return to that innocent childlike world of make believe, and dream of the possibilities.

My dream is simple. To work for Sanctuary full time, and to be able to give freely of my time and energy to our friends. I love this community. The joy it brings is immeasurable. The support and love I've experienced and witnessed is nothing less than Christ-like. The depth of relationship that comes from walking side by side through life has been incredible. It is hard at times, and it is a struggle to see hope in some of the darker situations, but through community and love, we continue to come through the harder times. I dream of a Sanctuary where we are all living in true community, continuing to support one another as we reach even deeper levels of relationship. Creating a safe space where we can sever limitations and expectations and grow into the family that Christ intended.

'if your dreams don't scare you, then they're not big enough.'

Alas, I do not live in this dream world, and the reality is that I am really struggling with fundraising. Leaving my dreams and hopes in God's hands is terrifying. Our work relies on friends like you to continue. I would love the opportunity to meet with you and share my dreams of what working at Sanctuary could look like. If you are interested in learning more, please contact me and check out our website for updates on our Masquerade Fundraiser coming up this fall! ~BA





SANCTUARY LONDON

THANKS FOR READING & THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

LOOKING FOR FAMILY?

Sanctuary is currently looking for people who are interested in community "family style" living. We have one upcoming vacancy in our female house and two upcoming vacancies in the male house. Looking for strong anchor members. Please contact us!

YOU'RE INVITED!

Want to learn more about Sanctuary? Please join us for a meal! Sit with our community and take the opportunity to get to know us just a little bit better.

Wednesdays @ 5:30pm, 513
Talbot St.

SAVE THE DATE!

Fall Masquerade Fundraiser
October 27, 2017

531 Talbot Street London, ON
www.sanctuarylondon.ca