



BY DARRYL RECKMAN

I love the fall. The leaves start changing colors, the evenings become cooler, and there is something about the crisp, fresh scent of the air that just makes me feel alive. The world is changing all around us, and it is a great reminder that just like the seasons of the year, everything in life experiences changes. These transitions are inevitable. And my life, as well as the life of Sanctuary as a whole, holds no exemption!

As you likely know, our teaching pastor and co-founder, Gil Clelland gave notice of his resignation in early June. Gil is thriving, and continues to support people who are experiencing homelessness in the city of London in his new role with WISH-To-Be-HOME.

We also have had some significant transitions on our Board of Directors, and would like to introduce you to our new Board Chair, Arlene O'Brien.



Arlene is a Customer Service Lead at Scotiabank, and has spent the last 10 or so years observing Sanctuary from the outside, trying to discern how her and her family might get involved. Well guess what Arlene... you got involved! And we are very thankful to have you.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing chair, Steven Cassidy, for his many years of dedicated service to this community. Steve has been a centerpiece at Sanctuary right from day one, almost twelve years ago.

As for myself, I am feeling so blessed to have been able to take the past two months off to finish my schooling and have some extended time to rest, and reflect. I have officially completed my degree of Masters of Theological Studies at Tyndale Seminary. I then spend much of August camping and reconnecting with my family. September was spent largely at home finishing up some projects around the house, resting, and working on me.. I even had time to do a few solo hikes and some paddling! (cont'd)

# A COMMUNITY OF BELONGING.

BY MECHELE TEBRAKE

As fall is upon us it seems natural to reflect on transitions and changes at Sanctuary and in our community. This past eighteen months has been full of transitions like no other time in my life. Covid, deaths of people in our community, sabbaticals, new staff, vision planning for the fall. I have had several transitions in my own life and family. I could write about it all but will instead write a few paragraphs about one. Keeping up and honouring each transition is a difficult task when so many things are changing at the same time.

Several community members have died over the past year and a half. It has been a strange and surreal experience to grieve the losses of these good people. In many instances we have had no concrete way to confirm the deaths that are whispered about. Covid has forced our community to move from spending much time together around tables to spending brief and sometimes meaningful moments standing in line with each other. Some people don't come around anymore or as much, yet our line for meals continues to grow. It's been more challenging to keep up with each other even though we are trying our very best. Our thoughts drift between wondering if someone is not coming around because they are Covid concerned or are they dead. The tension is anxious and uncomfortable to live with. It makes reunion so much sweeter when it happens.

A fear that is often expressed in our community is "What if I died? Would anyone notice? Would anyone care? Does that even matter?" Many in our community don't have obituaries memorializing them on-line or in the newspaper the way many in society do. The truth of the matter, to answer the forementioned questions, is for some people in our city the answer will be, "no". We live in a society where some people are forcibly deprived of belonging. It is a sad and devastating event when someone dies, and the only person to notice is their social worker because they missed a scheduled appointment. Therefore, communities like Sanctuary need to continue to exist. We need to continue to strive towards building a welcoming community with those who have been forcible deprived of belonging. In this way people who might not have obituaries written about them will know that they matter, that they will be missed, that they are cared about, to know that they are welcomed, to know that they are beloved, and to know that they belong.

D.R. Cont'd

I am so thankful for everyone who helped to make my time off possible. I am truly blessed with some amazing people in my life including board members, co-workers, volunteers, and especially community members who have all stepped up in significant ways. Thank you to each one of you.

As we enter into this new season in the life of Sanctuary, I am so excited to be journeying together with you. In the near future, we will begin a process of revisioning, and re-dreaming about what Sanctuary is being called to be. Since the very beginning we have always said that we are "becoming". We are not there yet, and perhaps we never will be. But we continue to strive to stretch and grow and to be reshaped into something new.

Are you ready to change? We invite you into this process with us as we seek to Find Home. Together.



# TRANSITION STORIES...

BY TESSA BUCKLEY

He tilts his face towards the warm sun on an early spring morning. His gray hair almost glows like a halo with the reflection.

"I've always preferred it outside" he says slowly and quietly, the way in which he always speaks, in response to my bland conversation starter remarking about the weather.

I don't know how long he has lived outside, he does not even remember coming to this country. I would ask him on cold, winter days as we were closing up if he needed anything for the night ahead and he would gently take the mop from my hand with a smile and simply answer "I'll finish this for you. You look tired. You must take time for rest."

He has an earthy way about him, from his clothes to his smell and the moss stuck to his hat, a man close with his Mother. Although sometimes a relationship strained with the bitter wind and the rain and the cold. He finds rest among the trees and the animals and the glow of the moon. Perhaps years spent outside.

He has now found a house, a mattress and a bed and a room of his own where he can sleep in peace and not be woken by the light of day or squirrels scurrying about, and he now takes prescribed medication when the warm sun can't calm the voices he hears.

I don't see him often anymore.

I wonder if he still prefers it outside.

~Transitions.



"I'd like to go now. I want to go to a better place. Can you help me get there?" Her expression is motionless but absolutely honest. She is staring right at me but somehow looking past me. She has a heavy heart full of pain and exhaustion.

Someone just abused her. Someone stole her meal. Someone ripped up her tent and the police chased her away.

Sometimes when she's angry she can put a fist through someone's nose, but because she is small, it is she who loses every fight. So she gives up and turns her rage and sense of self-defense into a search for relief which she usually finds in cheap beer. She's proud to tell me when she is feeling good from her buzz. She is calmer, doesn't ask me to put a bullet in her head, even makes wry jokes and takes an extra meal for a friend.

The bottle or the pain.

~Transitions.

# WELCOME TO THE TEAM DAN!

BY DAN OUDSHOORN

The word “transition” came into the English language in the mid-15th century and derives from the Latin “transitionem” which refers to a “going across” or a “crossing over.” Today, the word “transition” refers to a process of changing but, as the etymology suggests, this is often an irrevocable change, or a fundamental change in state or identity. Sometimes transitions are forced upon us—the death of a family member, a parent or child, forces a transition upon us. Sometimes we choose to pursue transitions ourselves—as, for example, when we decide that the injustice of our current socioeconomic order is too much to bear and must be changed. Sometimes transitions make us into something new and different than we were before—when my son was born, I became a father, something I could not have imagined being. Other times transitions make us more fully who we have always been—as when my friend Ashe, who had always identified and been identified by others as a man, transitioned to being someone who is genderfluid and transfeminine. Transitions, then, can be complicated, contradictory, terrifying, wonderful, difficult, and the best thing ever.



Sanctuary London is going through a transition. A founding member has left the team, a new member (me!) has joined the team, an old Board Chair has finished his term and a new Board Chair has started her term. The City of London, itself, is very different than it was when Sanctuary began over ten years ago, and those who we serve find themselves in even more difficult circumstances—more deeply impoverished, more systematically oppressed, and more violently abandoned—than ever before. How we navigate and experience this transitional time depends on a lot of factors, not all of which are anything close to being under our control. In many ways, we are “going across” and “crossing over” a large body of water in the fog and we cannot yet see where we will land and what our destination looks like.

And yet! And yet, we know a number of things about where we would like to go. We would like to arrive at a place where nobody is forcibly deprived of belonging. We would like to arrive at a place where people are not abandoned and left for dead and where all people can participate in the abundance and fullness of life that the Creator makes available to us—not only within the world itself but through the active and ongoing participation of the Spirit of Life within and among those who are left for dead. For, in the places where Death pushes down most forcefully, the Spirit of Life also rises up most vigorously. Thus, in our crossing over, it is important that we do our utmost to attune ourselves to the workings of that Spirit lest we find ourselves arriving in a land governed, not by the Creator and Giver of Life, but by Death who, as the Apostle Paul reminds us, continues to rule through all the Powers and authorities of the world as we know it. Surely, then, as we engage in this crossing, we must take up our own crosses and continue to deepen our relationships with the crucified people of today. In this way, we will also find ourselves in the company of those who experience resurrection life, not only in the future, but here and now, in the midst of our present evil age. Onwards, then, into the fog!



## Sanctuary London

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