

FRIENDSHIP HOUSE OF BRANT

God's Love in Action



Annual Report for 2022

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Executive Director Report - Carol Owen

2022 was certainly a year of change and surprises. With God's hand continually guiding and supplying, Friendship House blossomed in its' ministry and outreach to the homeless and vulnerable.

My biggest joy was to witness the number of clients who now wanted that sense of belonging by taking on the status of "volunteer". Using whatever gifts and skills God has blessed them with, they help out and forge a greater aspect to the Friendship House family.

Many events took place during the year: the Spring Volunteer Appreciation breakfast, Easter meals, Afternoon Teas & Harvest celebrations and, of course, my favourite – Christmas – which unfortunately had to be celebrated at the beginning of 2023 due to winter storms. But the highlight of the year, was the celebration in July of 25 years serving the community at Friendship House. Many changes have been seen over the years and these were recorded and displayed by Katie in our upstairs hallway and archival display room. Those with a love for the historical Temple Baptist Church/Friendship House can see the hand of God in the changes, twists and turns as the ministry develops.

An Art Wall was also created this year. Our clients, supporters and friends could display their artwork and tell their stories. This has been a great success, a lot of fun, and very beneficial to the health and well-being of many. Natalie's Stop & Shop Store continues to be enjoyed and well-used by many. Proceeds go towards buying bus tickets and necessities for the clients. We also created a "back table" where donations that didn't fit our mandate (food, clothing & some necessities) were placed for anyone to take. Any items left at the end of the week were shared with other ministries.

We continued to make lunches for students who didn't bring a lunch to school. Between elementary, high schools and alternative learning centres, over 300 students were fed weekly. Breakfast, brunch and takeout meals were provided 4 days of the week, providing over 400 meals. The Food Bank, thanks to God's generosity, always has provisions to offer – both Wednesday mornings and evenings. We are privileged and delighted to have the help and support of a team from Enbridge. They have made it possible to be open on Wednesday evenings, reaching out to the working poor.

Each Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas, we celebrate heartily! We try to bring that joy to the many who don't have friends, family or ability to celebrate. Each year, we make up boxes filled with activities, games, snacks, hygiene products and necessities and deliver them to Senior Homes and Lodgings for our marginalized community. Some of our “behind the scenes” volunteers are very instrumental in this ministry, raising money and awareness, providing and delivering goods, painting and personalizing cards, but most of all, making sure that no one is left out.

For me, one of the biggest changes came when I realized it was time for me to retire. It started with a phone call from CBOQ 's (Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec) Tim McCoy. We talked about many things, but his question of “Have you thought about a succession plan?” made me think! I hadn't thought about leaving Friendship House – ever – but my health was failing and maybe I should be thinking about the future. So, I prayed, and lo and behold within a very short space of time, I had first an email and then a visit from Shawn Erb. Shawn felt the nudge of the Holy Spirit and responded by resigning from his post as Pastor of Dundas Baptist Church and volunteering at Friendship House. God had called Shawn into the position of Executive Director and called me to a time of rest and healing.

As Henry Drummond states in his book “The Greatest Thing in the World”, “to live life abundantly is to love abundantly; to love abundantly is to show kindness, care and compassion to your fellow man.” In other words, showing “God's Love in Action.”

Well done to all my fellow servants of Jesus Christ!

Respectfully submitted
Carol Owen

Interim President & Prayer Support Report – Beverly McLean

The Board is so Thankful for the friends, supporters and volunteers of Friendship House who enable our ministries to continue. There is a dedicated team of faithful volunteers sorting and stocking shelves in the Food Bank. School lunches are being prepared and delivered.

The clothing closet has been able to supply seasonal clothing and necessities to our clients.

Our mission remains the same, to serve up daily nourishment from the kitchen for hungry clients as well as safe companionship and encouragement. Now that pandemic restrictions have been lifted we are happy to welcome guests daily, Monday through Thursday.

Friendship House celebrated 25 years service to the community in 2022, many of those years under the leadership of Carol Owen.

It is with sadness we say farewell to Carol as Executive Director and we wish her good health and many blessings. Mari Hacquoil, her faithful assistant, has also retired and as with Carol, we wish Mari many blessings.

In 2023, we will welcome Shawn Erb as Executive Director.

GOD has been faithful in providing financial and volunteer support over the past year. We continue to prayerfully seek his direction and wisdom for FRIENDSHIP HOUSE.

God is good, all the time!

In His Service,

Bev McLean

(02/09/23)



Ode to Carol

For many years, the face of
Friendship House
has been our Carol Owen.
For all these years, to countless lives,
the love of God she's shown.
Each client and each volunteer
has a place in Carol's heart.
With patience and God's leading
they all were given a part.
As Carol's fond of saying:
"This ministry's not man's.
We try to be obedient
and follow all God's plans".
And now it's time for changes,
as Carol writes her Memoir,
But we'll never say Good-bye to her,
just only Au Revoir!

Communications Report – Valerie Hastings

What a joy it is to send thank-you cards to all of the kind and generous people who donate to our ministry!

All donations, whether it be food, gently-used clothing, financial or miscellaneous gifts are welcomed. Several churches give faithful monthly or quarterly financial donations as do some individuals and companies such as Enbridge.

Keeping up with the technical age, some people choose to donate online through PayPal or Benevity. These thank-yous are sent by email back to their emails if shared with us.

We try to remember with cards, the birthdays of all of our wonderful volunteers. Special occasions such as Easter and Christmas are also noted with cards.

Spring and Fall Newsletters keeping our community up to date on happenings at Friendship House were distributed.

In July, 2022, Friendship House celebrated its 25th Anniversary and so a special booklet from our roots to present day was prepared for this occasion.

May the Lord continue to bless each individual, church and business that has chosen to join with us in our ministry to those in need of food, clothing and a safe place to spend a few hours.

In His Service
Valerie Hastings

The Open Door Report

The Open Door (TOD) is a congregation of the Free Methodist Church in Canada. Our vision as a faith community is to make God's kingdom dream of love and peace real and visible in our world. In furtherance of that vision, in January 2017, we began meeting at Friendship House (FH), joining them in ministry.

In entering into this relationship with FH, we knew we were partnering with people who were already doing what we hoped to do— sharing and showing God's unconditional love through word and action. Through this past year, TOD has contributed volunteers to the FH ministry, facilitated the Monday food program, organized special joint events with FH clients and volunteers, and contributed to the food bank, clothing closets, and other needs as they arise. And of course, we regularly join hearts in prayer with our friends at FH.

The year 2022 has been a year of change in both TOD and FH. We suffered a significant loss this year when Pastor Liisa Farrugia, our primary liaison with FH, moved away from Brantford. Her passion for the people and ministry of FH has been greatly missed. A new energy has come to the congregation with the hiring of Pastor Blake Found, who will bring passion and vision for outreach, including to clients at FH. Further change will come as a result of the retirement of our Lead Pastor, Greg Pulham, expected at the end of April 2023.

Of course, we all will miss the love and leadership of Carol Owen who retired at year end. But we welcome Shawn Erb as Executive Director and are excited for the future under his leadership.

We feel blessed to be a small part of the good work that is happening at FH. We look forward to the future and continuing our relationship with FH. God has provided us with a wonderful partner in the gospel.

"For all that has been, thanks; for all that will be, yes!" - Dag Hammarskjold, Markings

Kitchen Report – Colleen Goupil

I am pleased to report that post-COVID we are almost back to pre-COVID normalcy.

We have several great volunteer cooks working in the kitchen on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, cooking and serving nutritious meals for an average of 40 meals per day. We also prepare on average 30 take out lunches per week. These are in addition to the school lunches being made on Mondays which feed approximately 280 of our local school children.

We are fortunate to have several hard-working students helping with the kitchen chores including serving food to our clients, doing the dishes and cleaning the kitchen. As new students come in, they are each trained in proper kitchen procedures as well as food handling.

We also have a volunteer who does the weekly shopping for special items that have not been donated. We are fortunate enough to have approximately 75 percent of needed items donated on a weekly basis.

As well, we are lucky to have a volunteer who does the kitchen laundry on a weekly basis.

Colleen Goupil
February 18, 2023

Social Media Report – Natalie Mota

Facebook:

Friendship House Facebook page is used to communicate information with our clientele and our supporters.

People can see, react, comment and share our posts.

The current status of our Facebook Page is: 1.1 K likes and 1.2 K followers
We have a rating of 4.7 (from 24 reviews)

Posts for 2022 included:

Any changes to our hours, programs, or cancellations

Days that Friendship House was closed

Stop and Shop Store days

Online Sale dates and instructions (February and July)

Crafter's Fair – August 27th.

25th Anniversary Open House – July 30th.

Victorian Spring and Christmas Tea – April 14th. And November 24th.

Christmas Marketplace – December 3rd.

Requests for specific donations; such as, food for our Food Bank, baked goods for teas, hygiene items, chocolate eggs, winter hats, mitts/gloves, and mugs for various programs throughout the year.

Give-Away Day for children's clothing and toys – May 5th.

Request for volunteers – general, maintenance, cleaning

Inspirational quotes or messages for Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas

We also received private messages through our Face Book page with people:

asking us what donations we accept
offering specific donations
needing emergency food or clothing
inquiring about our hours and services
wanting to volunteer

Website:

This is a place where people can find out more details about Friendship House: who we are, our purpose, our services, any news, see pictures and to contact us.
The website is updated regularly.

People contact us for a variety of reasons; such as, needing food, offering donations, offering their services, etc. All messages through our website go directly to our email address which Carol Owen responded to.

Submitted by:
Natalie Mota

Stop and Shop Store Report – Natalie Mota

Donations Friendship House receives that are not suitable for our programs and that we do not have the space for, are set aside for sale to generate funds for programs, such as, bus tickets for our clientele.

Such donations would include: decorative household items, knick-knacks, figurines, wall art, collectibles, jewelry, occasional pieces of furniture, etc.

Items are new or nearly new.

Prices range from 50 cents, \$1, \$2, \$3, \$5, up to \$50.00 for the larger and more valuable items; such as, quilts.

Our in person 'Stop and Shop' Store ran the first Monday of each month from 10 a.m. to 12 noon between February and October 2022.

The store was also open on our 25th. Anniversary on July 30th. and the Victorian Tea in April and November.

In November 2022, we changed the store hours to open on Wednesdays which is our Food Bank day to take advantage of more customers, which was certainly accomplished. Monday mornings was only frequented by an average of 6 customers per month, compared to Wednesdays, which brought in an average of 15 people per month.

We had two Online Sales in 2022 through our Facebook page.
One in February generating \$170 and one in July generating \$205.

Items were catalogued, photographed, measured and posted on our Facebook page.

Sales ran for 2 weeks and then arrangements were made for buyers to pay for and pick up their items at Friendship House.

Also, some items were listed for sale on my personal Facebook page; such as, a collection of oil lamps, a buffet side board, china platter and a TV (all donations to Friendship House).

I reimbursed Friendship House for these sales.

SALES FOR 2022:

Stop and Shop in person sales: \$826.65

Facebook Online Sales: \$375

Items sold on Natalie's Facebook Marketplace: \$175 (oil lamps, buffet side board, china platter, and TV)

Sales from 25th Anniversary: \$62.40

Victoria Tea sales were not calculated

TOTAL: \$1,439.05 plus Stop and Shop Store sales at both Victorian Teas

Submitted by,
Natalie Mota

Maintenance Report

We had several headaches over the maintenance of the building. Not having a Board member to take control of this position, the lot fell to myself and staff members.

Pot Holes: Potholes in the driveway had become large and dangerous trip hazards to anyone, but especially to our elderly and marginalized. Getting quotes for the job was a headache in itself, but getting the work done was like a continual migraine!! The work is half done, but we need to raise a whole lot more money to finish the job.

Accessible Washroom: Moving the Food Bank to the larger area gave us a perfect space to put in this washroom. It's badly needed by many of the clients, but is also required to fulfill our desire to make everyone feel comfortable and welcome. Again, half done, needing labour and money to finish it.

Back Exit Door: Finding uninvited lodgers in our building showed us that security had to be ramped up. However, that really means new doors and new locks – another case of not enough labour, skills and money.

Washrooms: Our washrooms leave a lot to be desired and are high on our prayer list.

But when all is said and done, we have a building where our clients feel welcomed, safe and cared for. The other things will all come to pass – eventually!

Gardens Report

During COVID, our garden plots were closed except to a few volunteers who gardened for Friendship House. 2022 saw a few of our old clients return. However, our garden coordinators are now suffering with bad backs, bad hips, strained knees and broken ankles. 2023 will probably bring in some new faces and new leadership. On a different note, we have a garden shelter to provide respite from the sun and rest for the weary. We have noticed that it's also providing much-needed protection for our homeless.

This year, we started a new ministry. People could purchase an evergreen tree from us which would be planted in memory of a loved one. The trees will act as a wind break for the community gardens, provide some privacy from the road and help the environment.

If you're passing by, come and visit our Garden of Hope. Our wonderful gardeners have created a small garden paradise for us to sit and have lunch, watch the birds or just rest a while.

Fund Raising Report

With myself and several volunteers and staff members, we have applied for, and received, several small grants. God is always present to provide for our needs. But we are looking for someone to take over grant writing. Interested? Please let us know.

Afternoon teas, summer craft shows, Christmas Markets, yard sales and our little “Stop & Shop” store, have all helped to bring in a little money and provide a lot of fun and social activity.

Submitted by Carol Owen

Directors and Officers 2023

Name	Position
Rev. Shawn Erb	Executive Director
Charlene Hartley	Event Planner
Valerie Hastings	Secretary
Bev McLean	Prayer Ministry Acting President
Heather Nantais	Resources
Pastor Greg Pulham	The Open Door Liaison
Linda Slaman	Treasurer

Financial Reports are available upon request