

Place of Refuge 2011 Annual Report to the Churches

Place of Refuge has completed the process of purchasing the house at 655 49th Avenue in Vancouver. This was made possible by making arrangements with BC Housing to take over the mortgage on the house. The house officially became owned by Place of Refuge Society at the end of August, with the final steps being taken at the 2011 AGM in September.

We had 3 fundraisers: 2 concerts and the offering at the annual Good Friday service of the Mennonite churches of the South Vancouver area. We are also very thankful for amount each partner congregation commits annually to Place of Refuge. We are doing okay financially, but fundraising will always be a key responsibility for the society. Any good ideas for raising funds will be considered. We are currently putting together an investor package to help raise the interest in this ministry for potential donors.

Ted Klassen began a Bible study at the house in January 2011, and it continues on Thursday evenings. The website has been a work in progress, and is back up and running, with more regular updating, www.placeofrefuge.ca. Since Erich Krause is working out of town now, Heinz Harms has taken over as the go to person for house maintenance.

The house finally reached capacity in the Spring of 2011, and has stayed near capacity since then. The board seeks to develop relationships with the clients living in the house, including doing a summer barbeque and a Christmas dinner. We continue to encourage the supporting churches to find creative ways to build relationships with the clients and be in touch with the ministry. Invite the men to your worship services and small groups. Be in regular prayer for the clients and the ministry of the Place of Refuge. Provide various furnishings for the house as needed. Donate time to provide house and yard maintenance. Give financially, on a regular basis.

We are very thankful to God for the active partnerships that make this ministry what it is. Each of the partners is represented on the board. Each of the partnering congregations can have two board members, so we would love to add one more from each church; please let us know if this is your interest. Since we are all volunteers, and while it is very rewarding, it can be a lot work, so come help us divide up responsibilities. Also, we would welcome more congregations to partner.

Partner Congregation/Organisation	Board Member	Position
Culloden Church	Heinz Harms	House Maintenance Contact
First United Mennonite Church	Laura Penner	Vice Chair, Recording Secretary
Killarney Park MB	Lydia Toews	Treasurer
Sherbrooke Mennonite Church	Garry Janzen	Chair, Communications Coordinator
South Hill Church	Johannes Stolz	Representative to Hope for Freedom Society Board
MCC BC	Ron Van Wyk	Director
Hope for Freedom Society	Tom Bowlware	Direct Contact to the Household

The Core Purpose of the Place of Refuge Society is: *"To participate in building God's Kingdom on earth by sharing God's love with people suffering from addiction."*

- Submitted by Garry Janzen