

THE ADVOCATE

Flemingdon Park Ministry's Newsletter

FACING COVID-19 IN COMMUNITY

By Ben Tshin, Lay Pastoral Associate

Flemingdon Park Ministry has long been an organization that has focused on serving the most vulnerable in our small corner of Toronto. Our staff and volunteers pride themselves in building community through compassionate service to each person who comes through our doors. In the past 6 months, I've been privileged to work alongside these committed staff and supporters of this ministry.

FPM works to support the roots of new life for new immigrants and vulnerable community members. Our programs are places that relationships between isolated individuals and families can sprout and take root. Volunteers come to serve others and build skills that will set a foundation for future employment success.

However, the public health concerns of COVID-19 have weighed heavily on our community. As social distancing and self-isolation became mandated to contain the outbreak, FPM made the difficult decision to cancel its programs. We were heartbroken as we considered how this affects our friends. Most of our community live on the margins, and some rely on the hot meal served daily at our drop-in. Dozens of meals and snacks help sustain many individuals and families. But most people come to FPM for more than a meal, for more than just daily bread.

Even without COVID-19, many people are already socially isolated. They come seeking a warm welcome and sense of family. Some are seniors with few support networks. They don't have options to work from home nor means to hold virtual meetings with loved ones. Social distancing and self-isolation make life so much more difficult for them now.

Even with the best of resources, this pandemic is difficult for anyone. We are all experiencing grief and helplessness. But there are some things we can still do: we can place the health of others above our desires for freedom; we can be generous when others hoard; and we can care for the isolated through a phone call, a written note, or an offer to pick up groceries. FPM is now working with other local agencies to strategize how to safely deliver food to the community. We cannot do everything, and sometimes we can only do very little, but let us find whatever small way to love our neighbours as ourselves.



CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY!

By Melodie Ng, Farm Assistant

Strong, resourceful women are the backbone of FPM. From preparing daily lunches to sorting donations, keeping the coffee flowing to leading wellness workshops - our friends are ready to roll up their sleeves to support their community.

On International Women's Day (March 8th), FPM joined in the global celebration. Being female in an inequitable world involves tenacity and perseverance, and the women of Flemington Park have those qualities in spades. Many women are new to Canada and face the challenges of learning English, navigating different cultural norms, and building a new life with their families. The stresses of immigration can also increase domestic abuse and violence within families, and exacerbate experiences of isolation and depression.

And yet, week after week, women in our community demonstrate how remarkable they are. At Women's Group and through committed volunteering, women collaborate, reach out to each other, and offer their skills and energy for the betterment of the neighbourhood. Women of FPM: you inspire us, and we're so grateful for you!



"Women come to the programs at the ministry. It's better than staying alone at home and thinking about your worries. Here you can come together, find friends, and talk to others."

~ Tourpikei

*Empowered
Women
Empower
Women* 

Support our work in 3 ways!

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"Flemington Park Ministry"
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(2) Call us! (416) 425-1841

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