

Lifeline Newsletter



Volume 4 * Issue 1

Serving since 1988

"And if you give yourself to the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then your light will rise in darkness, your darkness will become like midday"

Isaiah 58:10

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The Lifeline Story

Lifeline Outreach Society began to reach out in 1988 to meet the critical needs of the homeless in the downtown core of Vancouver. There were a large number of runaways, elderly, working poor, immigrants, unemployed, as well as those with mental health and addiction problems. While reaching out to runaways living in doorways, the elderly and addicted that were sleeping under bridges, we recognized that it was a growing problem and began providing a hot meal, groceries, sandwiches, juice or coffee, clothing, counseling and minor medical needs. Referrals for jobs, shelters and existing resources was as another way of helping people get

their main needs met. The heart of the work was however, "friendship evangelism". Getting to know the people, hearing their story, caring and taking the time to invest in developing relationships and trust so that when we shared about Jesus it was coming from a position of a friend which often has a direct line to the heart.

In 2007 Lifeline expanded the feeding program to Abbotsford due to the migration of many homeless into the Fraser Valley and in 2009 we realized that the Vancouver region was being well served by many organizations so made the decided to concentrate our outreach to the Fraser Valley where the need was greater due to less resources

available.

As the number of "recently and chronic homeless" individuals numbers continues to grow, we are there to help. There exists a critical need for outreach programs and services offering a beacon of hope and care to those individuals who are drowning in depression, despair and poverty. Lifeline's Urban Outreach Department specifically focuses on serving the needs of these people who are down and out on the streets of Abbotsford and Aldergrove by providing the "Blue Bus" services of love.



The Blue Bus - More Than Just a Food Program

We converted an old Sunday school bus into what we call the "emergency response vehicle" and we load it up with pots of stew or chili, sandwiches, beverages, bags of groceries, clothing, medical supplies, tents and blankets as well as any other practical supply we can gather up. Then with a group of volunteers, we head downtown to the same locations week after week where people that have lined up are waiting for us to arrive. Our mandate of providing for

their physical needs is one way of connecting with people on a practical basis and avails an opportunity to discover what is going on in their lives that has put them in the predicament of having to stand in a line for a hot meal and groceries. Whatever their situation we try to refer them to the appropriate organizations that are able to assist them. More often now we are helping out the working poor. They have a job or are on unemployment but after paying for their rent and utilities, there is very

little money left over for food. When we meet their needs week after week and develop the relationships, barriers come down, trust is established so that we are able to better understand their situation in order to help them out and encourage them in their choices.





Groceries are handed out by Volunteers from the Blue Bus

"We at Lifeline are working to figure out what will make the difference in peoples situation and lives so that they can have the quality of life they deserve. "



Lifeline providing hard-to-come-by dairy products

Introducing Ken and Janice Smith

Week after week, God has put it on the hearts of many wonderful people who come and help this ministry be effective on the streets . They give of themselves sacrificially with steadfastness, even when the job at hand is not pleasant. It is our pleasure and desire to acknowledge and thank them for their wonderful contributions.



Ken and Janice Smith are committed to blessing people and sharing the Gospel of Good

Serving with the heart of God

News where ever they go by showing all they meet, the love of Christ through their lives, efforts and love. As Lifeline's right hand man and women, Ken and Janice are an

Lifeline's amazing Right hand man and women

integral part of the main functioning of the ministry from the physical work to the spiritual fortitude, they both are power houses for the Lord. Their loyalty, commitment and hard work from the inception of Lifeline serving in the Fraser Valley has made the overwhelming task of serving the poor lighter and most times entertaining with their humor and light heartedness. Ken serves faithfully on the Lifeline Board of Directors with his practical, down to earth advice which we so very much appreciate.

Ken and Janice have two children, 3 grandchildren and a newly adopted dog Amber in which they devote their lives and energies to. Their hobbies are family, friends, Alaskan Cruises, reading, gardening and for Ken shooting at the local gun range.
Favorite Color:
Janice * Blue
Ken * green and yellow

We have a place for you. Abbotsford and Aldergrove outreaches Sunday afternoon from 1:00 to 3:00 at CLCF is food prep, loading of the bus. 3:30 is the distribution of the food and clothing on Montvue and MacDougal in Abbotsford one week and 272 Field parking lot in Aldergrove the next week., with the clean up at around 5:30 back at the church. We can use your help at any point of the day. Call us and see how your talents can fit into God's plans through Lifeline. 604-728-7551

Homelessness in the Fraser Valley * Facts and Figures

Generally people do not choose to be homeless even though some people have thought that might be the case. For whatever the reason, we at Lifeline are working to figure out what will make the difference in peoples situation and lives so that they can have the quality of life they deserve.

The Fraser Valley Regional District conducted a survey of 345 homeless people in March 2011 and found that the main reasons cited for homelessness were:

- 1) Inadequate income
- 2) Rent too high
- 3) Family Breakdown/Abuse/Conflict
- 4) Health Reasons
- 5) Other

A few facts that came from that study are as follows: Just over one third of homeless persons experience long-term homeless-

ness of one year or longer.

The proportion of women within the homeless population increased from 32.1% in 2008 to 45.0% in 2011.

Almost three quarters of the respondents (74.8%) indicated that they live alone.

Welfare as a source of income was reported by 42.8% of respondents,

12.4% indicated that their source of income was employment, mostly part-time and temporary.

Just under half of the respondents reported a health related problem; of these, 53.0% reported having multi-

37.1% reported an addiction problem and 20.5% reported a mental health problem, with 15.0% reporting "dual diagnosis or concurrent disorder"—i.e., both addiction and mental health issues.

Almost three quarters (73.9%) of respondents reported that they have used community based services in various combinations over the past 12 months.

Information re-printed courtesy of the Fraser Valley Regional District.



Message from the Director Without hope, it is easy to give up

When a person has gone through the trials and tribulations of watching their children go hungry, watching their parents suffer with illness or some other tragedy in their life, often the thing that is stolen away from them is hope. Hope for a better future or to get through that crisis. Being a friend and being available to hear what's going on in their life helps develop trust. We do in some ways create for them a sense of hope and once they have that hope it is something they can hang

on to. Often it's our hope they hang onto at first, then over time they are able to have enough hope of their own to believe that their future doesn't have to be as bleak as they once thought, and that makes a difference in how they approach life.

My belief is that in developing relationships and getting to know individuals, we can understand their need and better serve them. It is a long-term commitment that takes a certain type of per-

son and compassion. We constantly need volunteers, people who are willing to come down and help hand out the meals, to help cook the food, we need corporate donors who are willing to pay for the cargo van and the gas so that we can travel and do the pick-ups that we need. We need people who care to come alongside and make sure we have the resources needed to meet the needs of those we serve.

Dave Poulette

"When a person has gone through the trials and tribulations of watching their children go hungry, often the thing that is stolen away from them is hope "

The Man on the Street

I see the man on the street walking slowly down the sidewalk carrying a bag of empty bottles. He looks tired and empty. I see him nearly every day. I wonder where he goes, what he does when he is not searching for abandoned bottles.

I see the man on the street laying on cement steps of an old meat shop downtown on warm nights and on cold nights. I wonder does he have anyone, where is his family, why doesn't someone help him?

I see the man on the street waiting in a row of people for help to arrive. They are anxious with anticipation. But then I see a contagious smile spread through the crowd as a big "Blue Bus" pulls into the parking lot.

I see the man on the street waiting in a line. He receives a bag of groceries from a volunteer on the bus. He gets in another line leading up to a window on the Blue Bus where

he receives a freshly made sandwich and a bowl of hot soup.

I see the man on the street eating a warm meal for the first time in a while. He is smiling from the humorous chatter coming from the people around him as they finish their meal. Their spirits are lifted, their anxiety is lifted. I see the man on the street being offered clothes, bread and dairy. But beyond that I see something that opens my eyes.

I see the man on the street find something more than an empty bottle, more than a dirty look from someone passing by. More than closed doors and cement stairs on cold nights.

I see him, this man on the street, being embraced by a volunteer from the "Blue Bus" I can tell they already have a relationship because they talk like old friends. The man from the street received fellowship, counseling and a quick prayer

to end their time together.

Then for a second the man on the street turns and looks directly at me and I saw something new on his face.

I saw fullness. Not a fullness that could be achieved by bags of empty bottles and cans or not a fullness from a recent meal but a deeper kind of fullness that can only come from making a connection, by being reached by someone who cared, a friend that took time to listen and be a friend.

I see the man on the street much like myself and many others. We are changed by Lifeline and the Blue Bus ministry. It is a beacon of hope to an anxious row of people, as much as it is to a busy bus full of volunteers fortunate enough to experience this act of great kindness and love.

- Anonymous Volunteer



Clothes, jackets, blankets and footwear are available for people to choose from.

"Those who shut their ears to the cries of the poor will be ignored in their own time of need "

Proverbs 21:13

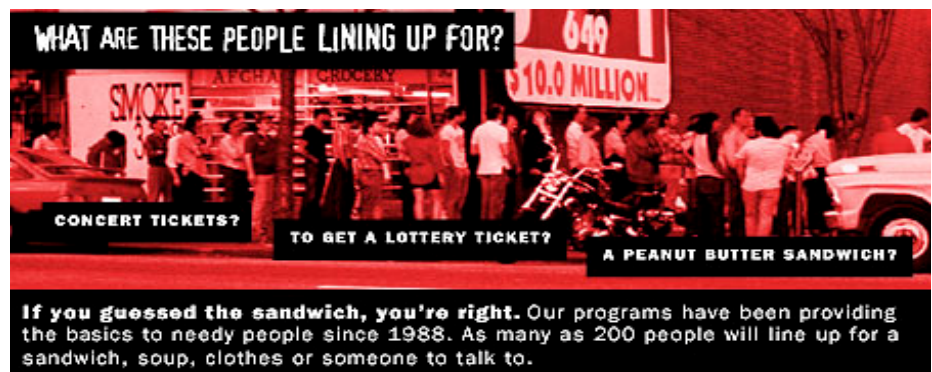
Our Mission : "To be a bridge between those that have, and those that have not"



Due to the mobile and street-based nature of Lifeline's Urban programs, staff and volunteers interact directly with the disadvantaged in their own environment. This provides a level of familiarity, comfort and credibility with those being served and often leads to relationships based upon trust. This is a key factor in addressing the complex issues behind poverty, homelessness, unemployment, and substance abuse. These relationships that are built open doors for people in need to help them take the final steps to changing their lives. As a reputable and benevolent organization, Lifeline Outreach Society is able to offer individuals hope, despite current circumstances; a hope that is desperately needed in our community.

Purposes of the Society

- * To witness and share hope, faith, love, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- * To operate our programs with good ethics and professionalism, always glorifying God.
- * To train and equip men and women to be disciples of Jesus Christ in caring for those who need our help.
- * To help the disadvantaged in a tangible way meeting their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.
- * To maintain and uphold biblical principles, our goals, our mission, and our Statement of Faith.



How Will You Help?



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Ways you can help

Send in a donation – cheques payable to "Lifeline Outreach Society"

Volunteer your time, we need: Help do food pick-ups, Pantry and Clothing Workers, Cooks and preparation help, Outreach Workers, Marketers, Promotional and Spokes Personnel, Prayer warriors and more...

**Please call Dave Poulette at 604-726-7551
if you wish to help or need more information**