

# ***Urban Christian Outreach (Ottawa)***

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***Update # 44***

***July 2007***

It is 7 a.m. on a rainy summer morning. Why would any sane outreach worker be on Bank Street on such a day? I fetch two coffees from Tim Hortons, one for me and one for God-knows-who. *Well, good morning, old friend!* says a voice at my elbow. At first I do not recognize her – it's amazing what a hairstyle will do – but as we talk over those two coffees I realize Sally is someone UCO befriended intensively on the sidewalks in the past. UCO people worked and prayed for her and with her. Sally has been through years of struggle for suitable housing and struggles with alcohol (for her, the two are connected). Now her life has turned a corner. This is a transformation. She tells me all her friends from the rooming houses are dead. It is a moment for us both to give thanks for one 'saved' friend and a new chapter in her life.

A few weeks ago someone very dear to me, a family member, came close to death and then was wondrously given back to us. It has left me in awe of the power of Christ through prayer and modern medicine – in awe of God. I realize all over again that life is gift, pure gift. We live by the grace of God: the God who works in our families and on the streets of Ottawa, the God who moves in this world in ways that are *unhasting, unresting, and silent as light*. God owes us nothing. We owe God everything.

I also owe a big 'thank you' to Nadia Behmann who willingly changed her own travel plans and stepped in to look after the UCO/ROMHC Class when I was called out of town. The class had a good closing week (starts again September), with an 'in-house' publication of student writings coordinated by hospital and UCO staff. Our students have achieved great things academically this year, from basic literacy tasks to Algonquin math readiness, ESL skills and GED success. Congratulations to them all!

It's my hope that you, our supporters, have a wonderful summer. Please remember the poor on our sidewalks and pray that God will turn hearts and situations into life-giving paths.

Yours in Christ,

***Katrine Barton-Coward***

UCO Exec. Director

## President's message

As I was reflecting on this week's lectionary readings, I came across this passage from Psalm 82: "Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked." What a clear reminder of our responsibility before God - a responsibility to not only confess Him as Lord, but also to undertake acts of mercy and compassion consistent with our confession. A tall order indeed, perhaps too much for an individual to bear. But in community, with some giving, some praying, some helping behind the scenes and some on the front lines, we can together fulfil the commands of God.

It is my privilege once again to thank all of our supporters for your faithfulness in practical and spiritual support for UCO's ministry to the poor.

Clinton Curle  
President of the UCO Board

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*Excerpt from UCO Charitable Objectives:*

***The main purposes of Urban Christian Outreach are: to establish contact with those in the city of Ottawa who are struggling to survive physically, spiritually or psychologically; and to mitigate the effects of urban isolation on the life of the individual.***

***We do this by pointing people towards a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ; and offering ongoing pastoral and practical care, including Christian education, street literacy and life-skills tutoring.....***