

Westside Anglicans Neighbourhood Ministry

The Neighbourhood Ministry is a collaborative ministry offered by the Anglican parishes of St. Anselm's, St. Philip's, St. Helen's, and St. John's Shaughnessy on Vancouver's Westside. Under the guidance of Rev. Dr. Pitman Potter, the Neighbourhood Ministry is in its 9th year of offering care, companionship and practical help to our most vulnerable neighbours living on the Westside streets and in marginalized conditions.

Street Ministry

At the core of the Neighbourhood Ministry is its street outreach program. Parishes collect non-perishables and basic necessities, which are packed up and distributed by teams of 3-5 people (one from each parish) to homeless folk on the Westside every Saturday morning, year-round. The greatest gift is that of conversation and companionship, and those living on the street have developed a trust in Neighbourhood Ministry volunteers. This ministry initiative transforms the lives of everyone involved – those who donate to the packets, those who pack them up, those who deliver them and our homeless neighbours who receive them - by fostering friendship and understanding.

Building Community at Dunbar Apartments

Neighbourhood Ministry volunteers help build community at the Supportive Housing apartments at 17th and Dunbar. Dunbar Apartments offers housing to formerly homeless people from the area – many of whom were referred by the Neighbourhood Ministry – as well as those suffering from mental illness. Volunteers at Dunbar serve dinner on the weekends and offer seasonal celebrations for building residents. In addition, volunteers offer one-on-one assistance that ranges from accompanying residents to medical appointments to pastoral care. The Neighbourhood Ministry contributes funding toward a breakfast program.

Mobile Care Unit

In 2017, the Mobile Care Unit (MCU) was launched in partnership with the UBC Schools of Medicine and Social Work. The MCU is a travelling team who provides basic medical care and social services to homeless and low-income populations in our neighbourhood who may face barriers to care. The team is comprised of doctors, medical students, social work students, and Neighbourhood Ministry volunteers. They visit three sites about 8 times per month, sites where homeless and needy neighbours gather for community meals. Currently, this includes visits to the Kitsilano Showers for the Homeless program (Saturdays), St. Mary's Kerrisdale (Tuesdays), and St. Augustine's Marpole (Thursdays). Volunteers assist in any way they can to help clients access resources and services available.

The Angels Program

The Neighbourhood Ministry has 'angels' to help with supporting the people we serve. Volunteer angels are paired with clients who require extra support in accessing services for which they are eligible. Angels play a significant role in supplementing services done by the Mobile Care Unit, working behind the scenes to advocate for and assist clients.

Funding and Support

Funding for the Neighbourhood Ministry activities is shared by the four sponsor parishes. Parishes donate items-in-kind, provide financial support, and the bulk of volunteers. Over the years, neighbours and friends not associated with the churches have joined as volunteers, to be part of this special and life-changing ministry.

There are many ways to support the Neighbourhood Ministry. You are warmly welcome to join us!

Neighbourhood Ministry
Packet Wish List

- Boost or Ensure Nutrition Drink
- Juice Boxes
- Tinned Meat
- Soft granola bars (avoid items with nuts and raisins as they are hard on the teeth)
- Fruit Cups and plastic spoons
- Socks
- Disposable Razors
- Sundries (small bottles of shampoo, conditioner, non-fragrant lotion, toothpaste, toothbrush)

Please, no expired items.



The Neighbourhood Ministry:

10 ways to Volunteer

Activity	Time Commitment
Pray for the Neighbourhood Ministry	Daily
Bring a donation for the care packets (see wish list)	5 minutes each week
Join the Indoor Team : help pack packets, provide fresh food for street team, send street team off from the church	A few hours every 6-8 weeks
Join an Outdoor Team : help distribute packets and build community with our homeless neighbours. Training provided.	Saturday morning, 2 hours, once per month
Serve dinner at Dunbar Apartments, home for formerly homeless folks and others suffering from mental illness	Saturday or Sunday, 1.5 hours once per month
Help with a Seasonal Celebration at Dunbar apartments, preparing and serving food and offering fellowship	3 hours, 5 holidays per year
Become an Angel , offering one on one support to someone needing assistance navigating the system, going to the doctor, etc. Training provided.	Varies. 5-8 hours per month average
Join the Mobile Care Unit , offering assistance at one of the sites the Care Unit visits. Training provided	3 hours per site visit
Help prepare and deliver communications to keep your parish informed of Neighbourhood Ministry activities.	2-4 hours per month
Donate money to the Neighbourhood Ministry. Donations can be made to your church (i.e. St. Philips Anglican) with "Neighbourhood Ministry" in the subject line. All donations are receipted for tax purposes.	Anytime