

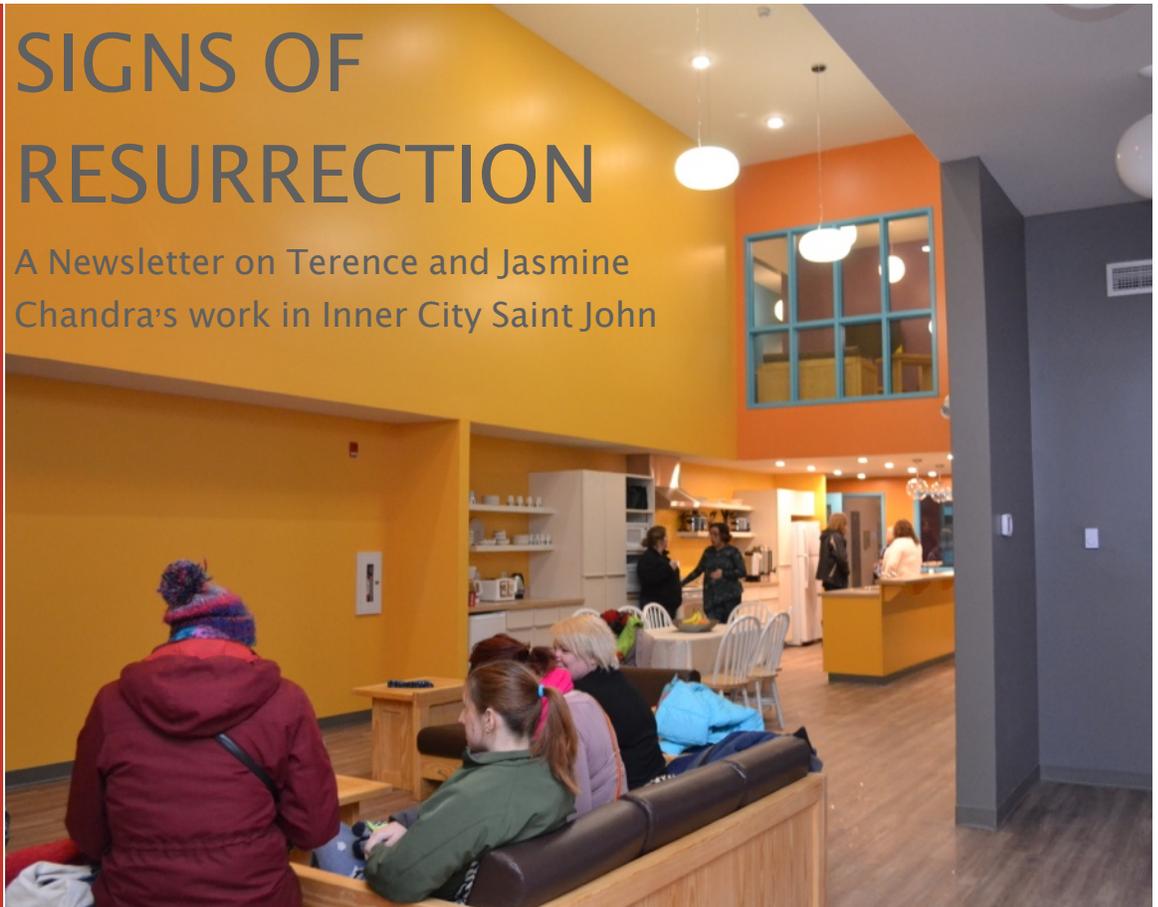
PENNIES & SPARROWS

April 2015

SIGNS OF RESURRECTION

A Newsletter on Terence and Jasmine
Chandra's work in Inner City Saint John

Safe Harbour -
A youth shelter
for Youth aged
16-24 opened
it's doors on
March 16th
2015. It is on
the site of St.
James's
Anglican church
which was
deconsecrated.
Jasmine
currently serves
on the board of
Safe Harbour.



Dear Friends,

We greet you with the traditional easter greeting used by Christians for centuries: “The Lord is risen!” (If you like, you may offer us the traditional easter response: “He has risen indeed, Hallelujah!”). The New Testament speaks of the resurrection of Christ as God’s great victory over the powers of sin and death- a victory that, although we ourselves haven’t personally won, are invited to share in nonetheless. Sharing in the Easter victory of Christ, however, isn’t the same as sharing in the victory of our favourite sports team. The latter we can do with a big bag of pretzels in our lap, a soft-drink in one hand and the remote control in another, without even having get up from our living room couches. Sharing in Christ’s victory, however, involves standing up and joyfully applying ourselves to whatever task the Lord has given us to labour at, knowing that, because of the empty tomb, our victory is guaranteed. As the Apostle Paul writes, “Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

We thought that this Easter season would be an appropriate occasion to fill you in on some of the specifics of our joyful labor- the work that the Lord has called us to do in the inner city of Saint John.

Over the course of the past ten months since our ministry as Community Priests began, our primary task has simply been to acquaint ourselves with the neighbourhood within which our ministry is focussed- getting to know the businesses and the nonprofits at work in the area in addition to the people whom they serve. Day-by-day, we’re learning more about the culture of the community, building relationships with our neighbours and listening to their stories and experiences. (The Christian Community Developer, John Hays, calls this “courting the neighbourhood”). We have devoted many hours of our time to visiting representatives of the various non-profits at work in inner-city Saint John, from those that deal with housing and mental health, to those that are focussed on education and crime reduction. We have even begun to regularly volunteer our time in a few of these organizations- among them, Outflow, the Elizabeth Fry

Society and the Teen Resource Centre. Doing so gives us a great “street-level” understanding of the neighbourhood, specifically the problems that many of our friends face on a day-to-day basis.

When we met with the Newcomers Association at the YMCA it was expressed that there was a need for more places to practice conversational English. As a result we’ve formed the English Language Café. Every Friday Morning at ten o’clock, we brew coffee and make tea in the little kitchen at Stone Church. Then, with some of our friends from Saint John’s international community, we chat about everything from the profound (politics, science and religion) to the mundane (new winter tires, tax season and job resumes). As the author of Hebrews writes, “Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it” (Hebrews 13:2). The guests at our English Language Cafe may be too humble to think of themselves as angels. Hopefully, however, they wouldn’t mind being described as our friends which is what some of them have certainly become as a result of the time they’ve spent with us.

This past March has also seen the launch of a new, South End, interdenominational Youth Group- a ministry that we’ve begun in partnership with a number of different people; among them, Bonnie Hunt of Inner City Youth Ministries, Colin MacDonald, the Directory of Youth and Intergenerational Ministries for the Diocese of Fredericton and Roger and Dana Stoesz from the

Saint John Vineyard. Our hope is that our group would be a safe place for youth of the South End to gather, not only to have fun and build relationships, but to learn what it means to be a lifelong disciple of Christ.

We continue to meet people in our building and neighbourhood. We have several families and individuals that we are walking with and “being with”. As these relationships have deepened we are honoured that they have opened their lives to us and trust us.

As we quickly approach our second year of Ministry as Community Priests in inner city Saint John, we wish to thank all of you who have supported us, either financially or with your prayers. We are honoured that you would deem our ministry valuable enough to warrant your support. for regular updates on our work or to simply hear our thoughts and reflections on Christian ministry, please visit our blog: penniesandsparrows.org.

Blessings to you all. The Lord is risen!
 Rev. Terence and Rev. Jasmine Chandra

“...being with is not fundamentally about finding solutions, but about companionship amid struggle and distress. Sometimes the obsession with finding solutions can get in the way of forming profound relationships of mutual understanding, and sometimes those relationships are more significant than solutions.” Samuel Wells and Marcia A.Owen from their book - Living without Enemies.

Terence & Jasmine Chandra

penniesandsparrows.org

jasminechandra@gmail.com

tjchandra1@gmail.com

