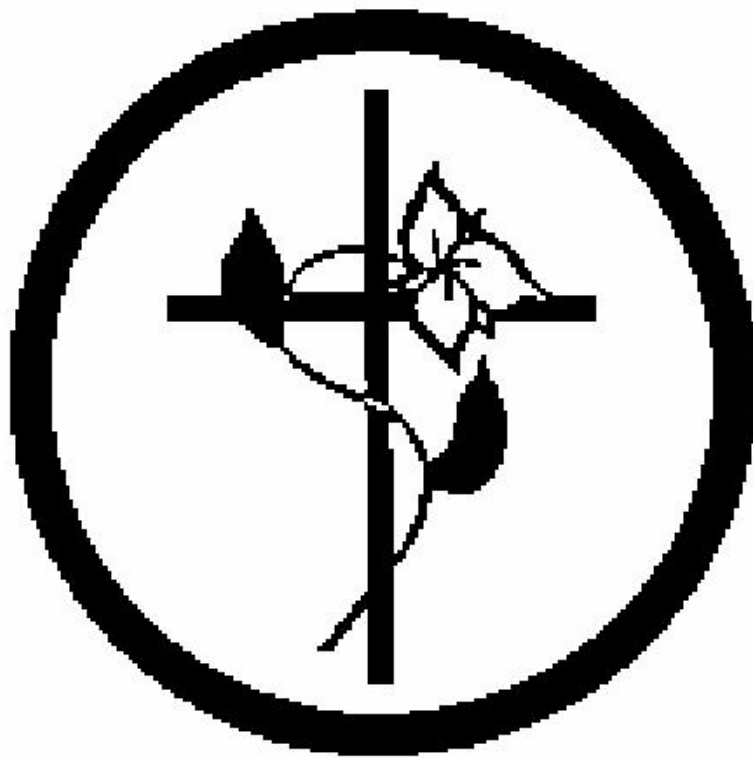


New Life Christian Reformed Church

# DEACONS' HANDBOOK



*Praise God! There's new life for all.*

September 2013

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### **PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK**

This handbook has been compiled by the deacons as a resource in their calling to support and encourage those in need and encourage members of New Life Church to become involved in reaching out to those in need in our church, neighbourhood, city, country and world. Our responses will vary with the need and situation and the gifts of those responding to these needs. Recognizing this, the material in this handbook is not prescriptive, but intended to help prepare new Deacons and assist all Deacons as they reach out to those in need.

### **ROLE OF THE DEACONS IN THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

*From the Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons (1982, updated 1989)*

Deacons serve by showing mercy to the church and to all people. They received this task in the early church when the apostles designated special persons for the work of mercy (Acts 6; 2 Cor.8-9). In Christ's name the deacons relieve victims of injustice. By this they show that Christians live by the Spirit of the kingdom, fervently desiring to give life the shape of things to come. Deacons are therefore called to assess needs, promote stewardship and hospitality, collect and disburse resources for benevolence, and develop programs of assistance. They are also called to speak words of Christian encouragement. Thus in word as well as deed they demonstrate the care of the Lord himself.

#### *Charge to the Deacons*

I charge you, deacons, to inspire faithful stewardship in this congregation. Remind us that "from everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded" (Luke 12:48b). Teach us to be merciful. Prompt us to seize new opportunities to worship God with offerings of wealth, time, and ability. Realize that benevolence is a quality of our life in Christ and not merely a matter of financial assistance. Therefore, minister to rich and poor alike, both within and outside the church. Weigh the needs of causes and use the church's resources discerningly. Be compassionate to the needy. Respect their need for dignity; hold in trust all sensitive matters confided to you. Encourage them with words that create hope in their hearts and with deeds that bring joy into their lives. Be prophetic critics of the waste, injustice, and selfishness in our society, and be sensitive counselors to the victims of such evils. Let your lives be above reproach; live as examples of Christ Jesus; look to the interests of others.



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### ***DEACONS AT NEW LIFE***

#### **Mission Statement**

Demonstrate Jesus' compassion and provision by encouraging members of New Life Church to respond to needs within our church community; within the city of Guelph and particularly the Brant and Waverly neighbourhoods; and within our country and world by encouraging support of denomination ministry and agencies and other Christian organizations.

#### **General Responsibilities or Functions**

- Provide encouragement and support, including financial assistance to individuals in need, both within our church and in the wider community.
- Encourage positive community development in our neighbourhood through involvement and support of the Brant and Waverly Neighbourhood Groups.
- Oversee and provide financial support to ministries of New Life, such as the Collective Kitchens and Clothing Closet programs, that respond to the needs of people in our community; and encourage members of New Life to be involved in these ministries.

#### **What the Deacons Do**

- Seek out and provide support and practical help to people in our church community experiencing difficulty.
- Respond to calls for assistance from people in the wider community, provide support and practical help, and connect people with services available in the community through agencies such as the Drop-In Centre, Food Bank, Community Health Centre, Salvation Army, Family Counseling and Support Services, and the neighbourhood groups.
- Encourage faithful stewardship and generosity in our church community. Set offering schedule, collect weekly offerings during the worship service and serve communion; write-up cause descriptions; promote special offerings such as the World Renew/CRWRC World Hunger Campaign, Canadian Foodgrains Bank and Operation Manna.
- Connect with the Pastoral Elders and Shalem Mental Health Network to offer CAP to people in our church community.
- Oversee the Community Clothing Closet Program.
- Oversee the Collective Kitchens Program.



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- Submit applications for refugee sponsorships and oversee the Refugee Sponsorship Committee.
- Provide financial assistance to youth and other members of New Life CRC involved in service and mission projects.
- Support community involvement and leadership development of students involved in the Guelph Campus Ministry.
- Participate in opportunities provided by Diaconal Ministries Canada such as the Classis Huron Diaconal Conference and Days of Encouragement; provide financial support to Diaconal Ministries Canada.
- Make members of New Life aware of and encourage their financial support of the community development and relief activities of World Renew/CRWRC.
- Foster a supportive relationship with the Brant and Waverly Neighbourhood Groups; encourage the congregation to get involved with the Brant and Waverly Neighbourhood Groups by participating in activities such as the Thanksgiving food drive, the Guelph community food drive, back to school back-pack drive, and children's gifts for the Brant Christmas party.
- Liaise with the Guelph Community Health Centre; distribute Garden Fresh Boxes in the local neighbourhood, or GFB produce to their food pantries.
- Sponsor use of New Life's facilities by community groups.
- Represent New Life in community forums such as CORE, Food Security Round Table, Food Accessibility Working Group

### **Composition and Structure**

In 2013 there will be seven deacons: Eve is in the third year of her term; Robyn, Wilma, and Shawn will be in the second year of their term; and Miriam and Nicole in their first year. As a ministry associate, Jamie Vanderberg is officially an elder, and has requested to serve in the capacity of deacon. There is one vacancy on the diaconate this year as we have not yet found a replacement for Karl.

Deacons are nominated through the New Life nominations for office bearers' process, and affirmed by the church membership.

One of the pastors is an advisor and meets with the Deacons. As we are vacant, this role is currently being filled by Jamie.

The deacons select their chair, secretary, treasurer, liaison(s) to the Neighbourhood Group, and liaisons with the Clothing Closet Coordinator, Collective Kitchens Coordinators and Refugee Sponsorship Committee.



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Advisory committees are proposed for the Clothing Closet and Collective Kitchen programs, but are not yet in place. The proposed committees will be chaired by the Deacon Liaison and are intended to provide encouragement and support to the Coordinators, bring forward to the Deacons any decisions they should make about program direction and funding requests; help promote the program within the wider community; identify agencies to collaborate with and possible sources of additional funding for new directions.

The refugee sponsorship committee has been established and reports to the Deacons. This committee is currently busy with New Life's fifth sponsorship; more info can be found later in this handbook.

### **Method of Operation**

The Deacons meet monthly from September to June. The Chair sets the agenda for the meetings. Decisions are made by consensus whenever possible.

Two main policy documents used by the Deacons are:

- Guidelines on the Selection of Offering Causes and Cause Disbursements
- Guidelines on Providing Financial Assistance

The section on "Providing Assistance to People in our Church Community" as well as Appendix IV (Sample Plan of Action) require revision.

### **Accountability and Communication**

The Secretary prepares minutes of the meetings and distributes these to the other members of the Diaconate prior to the next meeting. A copy of the minutes (with names eliminated), and mini-minutes for the church newsweekly are submitted to the Ministry Coordinator.

Other groups within the church are informed of the actions and decisions of the Diaconate as they have potential impact on their activities. The Deacons receives communications from the Visionary Elders, either directly or through the Ministry Coordinator. The Pastoral Advisor is included in decision making, but does not vote. If there is a concern, or an opportunity for ministry identified by the Diaconate, and it is unclear who to contact about it, the chair of the Deacons consults with the Ministry Coordinator, Pastors or Chair of the Visionary Elders.

During the 2011/2012 church year, there were occasions on which the full council (Visionary Elders, Pastoral Elders, Deacons and Pastors) met. This continued on a regular basis in 2012/13, and will likely continue in 2013/2014 until recommendations from the Governance Structure Committee are received and approved.

The Deacons set an annual budget based on donations received from the congregation for Compassionate Ministries. Financial transactions conducted through the Deacons Fund (Compassionate Ministries) are audited at the same time as the transactions conducted through the New Life Ministries Budget.



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### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### Chair - Wilma, Shawn

- Set the agenda (Wilma) and preside over Deacons' meetings (Wilma and Shawn)
- Represent the Deacons at the Circle of Chairs (Shawn) and in interactions with the Visionary Elders and Board of Management (Shawn??)
- Encourage involvement of the Deacons in forums such as the Day of Encouragement, Diaconal Ministry Developers and Diaconal Conference, Food Round Table (Wilma)
- Serve as the CRWRC Champion or maintain regular contact with person (Judy Eising) serving in this role for New Life CRC (Wilma)
- Conduct annual ministry employee reviews with staff and key volunteers of programs supported through the Compassionate Ministries Fund (Wilma)
- Coordinate development of Annual Work Plan and review of Annual Schedule of Deacons' Activities (Wilma)
- Coordinate revision of Deacons' Handbook (Wilma)

#### Secretary/Administrator -

- Prepare and distribute copies of minutes of meetings
- Keep records and copies of minutes
- Present incoming mail to the Deacons and take care of other correspondence

#### Treasurer – Shawn

- Administer finances of the diaconate; keep records in good order
- Keep the deacons informed of the status of diaconal finances
- Draft annual budget for approval by the diaconate

#### Lead Deacon for Offerings and Disbursements - Eve

- draft offering schedule
- review and revise offering descriptions as needed
- Order inserts, devotionals and other materials to promote offering causes
- Receive and review requests for financial support from other organizations – bring forward if time sensitive, make recommendations if should be added to collection schedule or considered for support during year-end disbursements
- lead review of Policy on Selection of Offering Causes and Cause Disbursements; Establish guidelines for year-end Disbursements

#### Lead Deacons in Providing Assistance to Individuals – Robyn, Eve, Miriam, and ??

- Respond to requests calls for assistance from individuals and families in our church and wider community
- Lead review of Deacons' policy on providing financial assistance
- Maintain contact with CORE and the Drop In Centre; use knowledge to update Community Resources and Safe Visiting sections of Deacons' Handbook
- Support church staff as "first line" receivers of calls for assistance; review policy annually with church staff





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### Lead Deacons Coordinating with Brant & Waverly Neighbourhood Groups - Jamie, Nicole

- Maintain regular contact with staff and members of the Brant And Waverly Neighbourhood Groups
- Identify ways that New Life CRC can be active participants in these communities

### Lead Deacons for the Clothing Closet Program - Eve, Jamie

- Maintain regular contact with the Program Coordinator to provide encouragement and support
- In association with the program coordinator, prepare a budget proposal for submission to the Board of Management for staff support; and to the treasurer of the Deacons for other program support
- Lead the annual program review, and bring forward to the Deacons recommendations regarding program direction and funding requests to other organizations
- Participate in the annual ministry employee review, as requested
- Establish and chair a program advisory committee

### Lead Deacon for the Collective Kitchens Program – Miriam, Robyn

- Maintain regular contact with the Program Coordinator to provide encouragement and support
- In association with the program coordinator, prepare a budget proposal for submission to the Board of Management for staff support; and to the treasurer of the Deacons for other program support
- Lead the annual program review, and bring forward to the Deacons recommendations regarding program direction and funding requests to other organizations
- Participate in the annual ministry employee review, as requested
- Establish and chair a program advisory committee

### Representative to the Refugee Sponsorship Committee – Miriam

- Bring forward to the Deacons recommendations regarding applications for refugee sponsorships and associated financial support and update the Deacons on the status of sponsorships
- Participate in refugee sponsorship committee

### Liaison with the Guelph Community Heath Centre- Miriam

- Maintain contact with the Host Site Coordinator of the Garden Fresh Box Program at New Life CRC
- Provide a point of contact for staff and volunteer with the Guelph Community Health Centre
- Coordinate distribution of the Garden Fresh Boxes purchased through Deacons Fund

### Liaison with the Guelph Campus Ministry - Jamie

- Maintain regular contact with the chaplain and interns to provide encouragement and identify service opportunities with New Life Church for students associated with the Guelph Campus Ministry
- Submit a request to the treasurer of the Deacons requests for financial support of leadership development or other initiatives with the Guelph Campus Ministry
- Lead the Deacons in mentoring of the intern with the Community Gardens program with the Brant Neighbourhood Group



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### Liaison with Pastoral Elders (particularly regarding CAP and Wraps) - Nicole

- In association with the Pastoral Elders, prepare a budget proposal for the treasurer of the Deacons for financial support of CAP
- In association with the Pastoral Elders, help facilitate "wraps" around families with complex needs
- Become knowledgeable about Circles Initiative and Bridges Program in Guelph; share knowledge with PEs

### Liaison with the New Life Youth Ministries – Nicole, Shawn??

- Maintain contact with the leaders of youth ministries to identify opportunities for service

### Representative to Nominations Committee – ??

- Lead the Deacons in determining number of positions (any extensions of terms), and valuable gifts and skills for new Deacons (December)
- Lead Deacons in proposing names for potential deacons to the nominations committee (January)
- Participate in the nominations committee to propose a slate of nominees to the Visionary Elders (February)
- Meet with nominees to request that they let their names stand for affirmation as Deacons (March/April)

### Lead Deacon for Outreach Column in Church Newsletter – Eve

- remind deacons to submit news stories about deaconate and associated ministry activities
- edit, streamline, and pass on stories to bulletin editor once a month



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### **ANNUAL SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES**

*(Monthly meetings, except July and August)*

#### **September**

- Training and Orientation
- Assign Roles
- Promote Day of Encouragement; send in registrations
- Start developing Deacon's annual work plan
- Shopping trip for Brant Food Cupboard
- Organize and promote food drive for Thanksgiving Day
- Review Benevolence Fund Procedures/Referrals with church staff

#### **October**

- Complete Deacons' annual work plan; send copies to Visionary Elders, Pastoral Elders and Ministry Coordinator
- Send budget submission to BOM for Collective Kitchen and Clothing Closet Coordinators' compensation
- Attend Day of Encouragement (as many of the deacons as possible)
- Thanksgiving food drive – for Brant NG
- Promote World Hunger Week (November)
- Communicate with Brant NG (and Salvation Army) regarding Christmas hampers
- Send in names for Netherlands Bazaar
- Start process of developing Christmas giving (and consult with pastoral elders)
- Start drafting next year's Offering Schedule and confer with Worship Committee

#### **November**

- World Hunger Sunday
- Explore training options; reports from Day of Encouragement workshops
- Approve next year's Offering Schedule and send to ministry coordinator and treasurer
- Start drafting next year's Compassionate Ministries Budget
- Update Cause Summary List
- Finalize Christmas giving recipient list, decide on budget, person to assemble the baskets, and how they will be delivered
- Gift collection from the congregation for the Brant and Waverly NG children's Christmas party, provide other support as requested
- Consider year-end disbursements (if any)

#### **December**

- Enjoy your visits delivering the baskets, cards and vouchers
- Acknowledge contribution of volunteers (e.g. send thank you cards to mission reps, volunteers with the Clothing Closet and Collective Kitchens, etc.)
- Shopping trip for Brant Food Cupboard
- Approve Compassionate Ministries budget
- Make year-end Disbursements (if applicable)



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### January

- Review supports provided through community agencies
- Submit to the Nominations Committee positions and suggested gifts and skills for Deacons for the following year

### February

- Review guidelines on providing financial assistance
- Begin process for selecting new deacons (terms, gifts, skills)
- Promote Canadian Food Grains Bank offering (March)
- ??Plan Thank You Breakfast for Clothing Closet volunteers; send out invites

### March

- Canadian Foodgrains Bank offering
- Shopping trip for Brant Food Cupboard
- Organize and promote Easter Food Drive for the Brant NG and/or Guelph Community Food Drive

### April

- Continue process for selecting new deacons – information meetings with potential deacons
- Organize and Promote Operation Manna offering in May
- ??Host Volunteer Breakfast (NVW is April 6 – 13 in 2014)

### May

- Operation Manna offering
- Update the Deacons' Handbook
- Ministry Reviews with the Clothing Closet Coordinator and Collective Kitchen Coordinator; Deacons meet with the Coordinators

### June

- Installation of new deacons
- Hold a joint meeting with the new and retiring deacons
- Start process of orientation of new deacons (offering and communion procedures, protocol for opening the safe, set up buddy system for summer visits)
- Thank you to retiring deacons

### July and August

- Don't forget your weekly duties
- Deacons visits as required
- Reading to get you prepared for the fall (see Suggested Reading for Deacons)
- End Aug/beginning Sept – backpack drive for Brant NG



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### ***TIPS FOR DEACONS 'ON DUTY' DURING WORSHIP SERVICES***

- Arrive at the church ten minutes before the start of the service. The lead deacon (the person whose name is listed first on the schedule and in the order of worship) that the collection plates are in the cupboard under the mail slots and should slip the back door key into pocket. Just before the service, join the worship leader, the worship team, the pastor(s), and the assigned elders for a couple of minutes before the service to get any last minute instructions, to check that there are three other collectors (and if not, recruit some) and ask for a blessing on the service. This is usually in the front left corner of the sanctuary. The lead elder leads the prayer.
- At the appropriate time during the service, the worship leader will announce the offering. The lead deacon gets out the offering plates from the cupboard under the mail slots, gives an offering plate to the each of the two elders and other deacon at the back of the sanctuary, and indicates who is collecting from which section. Following the collection, the lead deacon brings the plates to the front of the church. All causes (New Life Ministries, special cause and compassionate ministries) are collected in one plate.
- After the service the deacons on duty put the offering in the safe. There should always be two people in attendance at the safe. Never leave the safe open and unattended. On the shelf above the safe there are red and yellow cloth bags. Place the money in the correct bag (counting committee does the sorting). Close and lock the safe and return the collection plates to the cupboard under the mail slots.
- Make note of your scheduled duty dates when you receive your schedule. If you are unable to be at church that day, it is your responsibility to exchange your day/service time with another deacon and to inform the Ministry Coordinator of the change.
- Respond to any walk-in requests for assistance (this rarely happens, and usually the lead deacon asks the other deacon to join them in speaking with the person requesting assistance).

### ***For communion:***

- The deacons on duty on communion Sundays are also asked to assist with serving communion. Communion is normally served once per month.
- The pastor will call the servers to the front of the church. Two elders and two deacons usually serve communion. Form a row to the side of the communion table. The pastor will serve the servers the bread, and then ask one of the four servers to serve him/her. If you are asked, take the basket of bread from the pastor, and offer it to him/her, with a blessing, e.g. "The body and the blood of the Lord, given for you."
- The pastor will then give each server a basket of bread and a cup. The basket of bread is passed first; then the cup follows. When done serving the main floor, one or two servers go to people in the sound booth and nursery and offer communion to those there who wish to participate. When everyone is served, the servers go to the front and place the baskets on the table.



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- When the congregation comes forward to receive the bread and juice, appropriate words are spoken during the distribution of the elements, such as “The gifts of God freely given for you”, “The body and blood of the Lord shed for you”.



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### **COMMUNITY CLOTHING CLOSET**

The Community Clothing Closet is a ministry of New Life Christian Reformed Church for the community of Guelph, and especially people in the Brant and Waverly Neighbourhoods community. The Closet is open Thursday and Saturday mornings and offers customers a welcoming environment in which they can obtain gently used clothing free of charge.

The Clothing Closet Coordinator is a paid position through the annual operating budget of New Life Church, and is currently based on 12 hours per week. This person oversees up to 40 volunteers who sort and tag clothing, keep the Clothing Closet organized, and provide a welcoming environment for customers. The person in this role must be self motivated and demonstrate the gifts of encouragement, patience and service; demonstrated strong organizational and supervisory skills, and be a Christian that conveys with enthusiasm how this program is part of the vision of New Life Church to "Know, See and Be Jesus".

The Clothing Closet Coordinator is part of the staff team at New Life Church, and reports to the Diaconate. The term of employment is for an indefinite period of time, unless otherwise requested by the Diaconate or the employee. Changes to the terms of employment and scope of work will be addressed during the annual employee review and the annual ministry review. An annual employee review will be conducted with the Chair of the Diaconate and/or another designate from the Diaconate.

#### Responsibilities of the Clothing Closet Coordinator:

- Ensure the Clothing Closet is open for people to select clothing during regularly posted hours
- Ensure the Clothing Closet is operated in a manner that is welcoming and safe for customers and volunteers and conforms with the New Life Church Safe Church Policy
- Recruit, train, and oversee the work of volunteers
- Arrange for the sorting, displaying and tagging of donated clothing; arrange for mending and cleaning of good quality clothing, depending on the availability of suitable volunteers
- Arrange to have the clothing "put away" on weekends and set up during hours of operation
- Determine if and when clothing drives are needed and oversee these drives
- Arrange for disposal of excess clothing when the Clothing Closet becomes over-stocked or closes
- Demonstrate appreciation for the volunteers and their contributions to the operation of the Clothing Closet
- Promote the clothing closet and clothing drives
- Collect information that demonstrates the utilization of this ministry, such as customer sign in sheets and customer counts
- Deal with fraud concerns, or make the Diaconate or their designate aware of these concerns
- Keep the designate of the Diaconate informed of concerns, accomplishments and reasons for thanksgiving
- Participate in an annual review of the purpose, objectives and operations and planning for the future operation of the Clothing Closet, with the Diaconate or their designate



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An annual ministry review of the Community Clothing Closet program and plans for the upcoming year will be done by the Diaconate, in consultation with the Coordinator, prior to development of the church's annual budget.

### **COLLECTIVE KITCHEN PROGRAM**

The Collective Kitchens Program is a ministry of New Life Christian Reformed Church for the members of New Life Church, the community of Guelph, and especially people in the Brant and Waverly Neighbourhoods, to cook healthy, low-cost meals. Through the Collective Kitchen Program, New Life Church strives to help participants develop social support networks, foster leadership and decision making skills and enhance their ability to plan and cook nutritious food at a cost within their budget. Generally, cooking groups are formed and meet once per month to prepare and bring home meals.

The Collective Kitchen Coordinator is a paid position through the annual operating budget of New Life Church, and is currently based on 10 hours per week. The person in this role must enjoy food preparation and cooking; be self motivated and demonstrate the gift of encouragement, hospitality and service; have strong interpersonal skills and exhibit tact and diplomacy; demonstrate strong organizational and supervisory skills; and be a Christian that conveys with enthusiasm how the Collective Kitchen Program is part of the vision of New Life Church to "Know, See and Be Jesus".

The Collective Kitchen Coordinator is part of the staff team at New Life Church, and reports to the Diaconate. The term of employment is for an indefinite period of time, unless otherwise requested by the Diaconate or the employee. Changes to the terms of employment and scope of work will be addressed during the annual employee review and the annual ministry review. An annual employee review will be conducted with the Chair of the Diaconate and/or another designate from the Diaconate.

#### Responsibilities of the Collective Kitchen Coordinator:

- Set-up and support Collective Kitchen cooking groups and their leaders.
- Ensure the Collective Kitchens are operated in a manner that is welcoming and safe and conforms to the New Life Church Safe Church Policy.
- If child care is offered for children of the cooks, ensure that this is welcoming and safe and conforms to the New Life Safe Church Policy.
- Be a leader of at least one cooking group.
- Recruit, train and support kitchen leaders for other cooking groups; work with leaders to address safety concerns, suggest and supply recipes, suggest strategies on working with difficult participants, arrange for the purchase of groceries and kitchen supplies as needed.
- Recruit other volunteers to support the development of the program.
- Demonstrate appreciation for the kitchen leaders and other volunteers through means such as acknowledgment cards or gifts at Christmas and end of June.
- Recruit and be the contact person for new people interesting in participating in the program.





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- Promote the Collective Kitchen program within New Life Church and in the wider community.
- Liaise with other agencies and organizations such as the Brant and Waverly Neighbourhood Groups, the Guelph Community Health Centre, and the Food Accessibility Working Group that seek to provide people with low cost, locally grown, nutritious food.
- Schedule use of the kitchen in consultation with the ministry coordinator; ensure the kitchen and equipment are adequate and in good repair.
- Coordinate any reimbursements; on behalf of the Diaconate offer and oversee matching contributions for cooks with financial concerns.
- Collect information that demonstrates the utilization of this ministry, such as number of kitchen groups and cooks, number of inquiries, cost of meals, suggestions for new approaches.
- Participate in staff meetings and activities, as availability permits.
- Keep the designate of the Diaconate informed of concerns, accomplishments and reasons for thanksgiving.
- Participate in an annual review of the purpose, objectives and operations and planning for the future operation of the Collective Kitchens program, with the Diaconate or their designate(s).

An annual ministry review of the Collective Kitchens operational objectives and plans for the upcoming year will be done by the Diaconate, in consultation with the Collective Kitchens Coordinator, prior to development of the church's annual budget.

### ***GARDEN FRESH BOX, a program of the Guelph Community Health Centre***

The Garden Fresh Box program is a program of the Guelph Community Health Centre that helps people in Guelph access affordable, fresh produce, as well as supporting local farmers. Secondary goals are to increase knowledge about food and nutrition, and support sustainable agricultural practices.

New Life Church is a participant in this program. The New Life Host Site Coordinator manager keeps a customer list, receives customer orders and payments, orders the appropriate number of boxes from the Garden Fresh Box office, and manages customer pick-up of their orders on Garden Fresh Box day - the third Wednesday of each month.

In addition, on packing day New Life Church provides space for the sorting and packing of the boxes and use of the kitchen for the volunteer meals, as well as storing the empty boxes between packing days. On packing day, a person from New Life must be available to unlock the doors (around 8 a.m.) and again when boxes are brought back for storage after delivery of the boxes to the other host sites in Guelph (around 4 p.m.) The Deacons oversee the use of the building for this community use.

One of the ways that the Deacons help people access affordable fresh produce is by subsidizing the purchase and coordinating the delivery of the Garden Fresh boxes to them. In addition, the Deacons at New Life purchase vegetables through the Garden Fresh Box program for distribution through the Brant and Waverly Neighbourhood Groups.



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### **REFUGEE SPONSORSHIPS**

Because Canada is the only country that allows sponsorship capabilities by private organizations, Canada is unique among nations welcoming refugees. World Renew is one Canadian agency that has a sponsorship agreement with the Canadian government (and therefore it is called a SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT HOLDER; as such, this allows CRC congregations (then called to work with World Renew to sponsor accepted refugees.

Under the umbrella of the deacons, New Life Church has undertaken five sponsorship applications with the help of World Renew. A bit of history follows.

In 1998 we sponsored the Mustafa family from Kosovo. This was a joint sponsorship between the government and New Life. This family still lives in Guelph, has their own cleaning business and had two daughters in University and two sons in high school. In 2006 we undertook an emergency sponsorship of a family from Columbia. They soon left Guelph for Quebec and are now doing well in BC. In 2007, after more than two years in process, the Zikama family, originally from Rwanda arrived. It has been difficult finding appropriate and meaningful work, so in 2012, they relocated to Mississauga to try to make a go of it there. In spite of their struggles they are thankful for the peace and stability of their lives in Canada. This was a private sponsorship; all of the funds to support the Zikamas for their first year in Canada were collected through a pledging process spearheaded by the refugee committee. In 2013, we received the Al-Saadi family from Iraq. This family is currently settling into their new home and school will begin for each member of the family this week. This sponsorship is designated as "Visa Office Referred," which means the government will support the family financially during their first six months in Canada, and the church, the second six months. Finally, New Life has applied to sponsor a friend of the Zikamas named Jean. Jean often helped the Zikamas during their time in Zambia. His wife was killed in 2008, in what he believes was a racially motivated killing. He tried to smuggle his children to Belgium but was discovered. World Renew believes there is merit for him to immigrate as a refugee as there is no durable solution to his situation. New Life has sponsored Jean's application. Unfortunately, because this is a "named sponsorship," there will be a process time of 2 to 3+ years. Since Jean has re-married, we are adding his new wife to the application. Please pray that the application for Jean and his family will be facilitated quickly, and for safety and wellbeing for him and his family as they wait in "limbo" land.

In all cases of refugee sponsorship, whether the government offers financial help or not, the sponsoring group (New Life Church) pledges to the government that it will support the family for their first year in Canada. For this reason, the refugee committee that operates under the deacons should keep the deacons apprised of financial needs and emergencies, and funds from the Compassionate Ministries budget should be used to help cover what is not covered by congregational pledging.



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### **ON A RELATED NOTE**

On a related note, the deacons of 2011 – 2013 have walked alongside Adela Ramirez, a faithful volunteer at the Clothing Closet and a friend of the church, in her bid to adopt her two grandchildren, who have been left without family since the death of their mother in 2010. The deacons have been helping Adela along the way by securing legal advice for her, helping her fill out forms and by paying some related expenses along the way. When the adoption papers do arrive, the deacons have committed to paying the processing fee for the formal application to CIC. See insert for more information.

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GUELPH CAMPUS MINISTRY**

Already back in 2008, it was brought to the deacons' attention that many of the students attending the University of Guelph are passionate about community development and social justice initiatives. Over the years, it has become clear that students want to find ways to serve not only on campus, but also both locally (in the City of Guelph) and internationally. Over the years, the deacons have partnered with Guelph Campus Ministry (GCM) by serving as a catalyst for new initiatives related to community development and civic engagement. From 2009-2011, the deacons enabled GCM to hire several student interns, who were set to the task of planning an annual solidarity experience in Kenya with the NGO Children of Bukati. Since 2011, the deacons have enabled GCM to hire a student intern to work within the Brant neighbourhood. The first intern worked with the community garden at Brant Avenue School, and the second intern served alongside the Neighbourhood Support Worker at the Brant Friendship House.

The deacons have opted to support student internships and fund new initiatives for a number of reasons:

- *It's good for the community*—Supporting GCM initiatives broadens the deacons' reach into the community by enabling more people to be engaged in justice-related work both locally and internationally,
- *It's good for the campus*—Student interns have been asked to serve as a liaison with the broader student body at the university, encouraging other students to volunteer and get engaged,
- *It's good for the church*—The “fruit” of these initiatives has been shared with the church community, with student interns leading Discipleship Hour and serving as a bridge between the deacons and the Brant Neighbourhood Group.

Moving forward, the deacons are open to continue receiving proposals for support from GCM. Though there is no set program in place, GCM is invited to submit proposals on an annual basis. The deacon's budget includes \$1000/year that can be used to fund new initiatives or support GCM's diaconal efforts. Proposals must outline the purpose of the diaconal initiative, spell out the funding required, detail the accountability structure that will be put in place and make clear the evaluative tools that will be used to measure the program's success.



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### ***CONNECTIONS WITH BRANT AND WAVERLEY***

New Life is uniquely situated between the Brant and Waverly communities, and many of the church's diaconal efforts are shaped by our location. In connecting with Brant and Waverly, we aim to develop ongoing and meaningful relationships within the community. We try to resist the temptation to offer programs "for" the community and try, instead, to work "with" them on the initiatives already being run by different agencies and community organizations. In all our efforts, we seek to address systemic injustice and work toward the development of a healthy and sustainable community, resisting the urge to simply offer charity. Several of our connections with Brant and Waverly are outlined in other parts of this handbook, including Collective Kitchens, The Clothing Closet and Garden Fresh Box. In addition to these aspects of our work, the deacons assign one or more individuals to serve as our Brant Liaison. This individual(s) serve on the Brant Leadership Team, meets with the other Brant Partners and connects with Brant Avenue School through programs like Run & Read.

**Brant Neighbourhood Group**—The BNG is an initiative of Family and Children's Services, so much of its efforts reflect this origin. It is largely funded by the City through its allocation process, which includes United Way funding. It also receives funding from local churches and businesses. The BNG employs a Neighbourhood Support Worker (Lynne), as well as a program director for its summer day camp and afterschool program. The BNG works out of the Brant Friendship House on Algonquin Drive, where it operates a food pantry and functions as a pick-up location for the Garden Fresh Boxes.

**Brant Leadership Team**—The Brant Leadership Team sets policy, direction and provides funding input for the Brant Neighbourhood Group and the Brant Friendship House (including all its programs and summer camps), and it helps support the Neighbourhood Support Worker. The Brant Leadership Team meets monthly on the first Wednesday of every month (6:00-8:00pm). It works under the umbrella of the city's newly devised Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition (GNSC).

**Brant Partners**—The Brant Partners is a quarterly gathering of representatives from different agencies and community organizations that provide services within the community. Sitting around the table are representatives from Family and Children's Services, Guelph Community Health Centre, Upper Grand District School Board, Community Housing, New Life CRC, St. David and St Patrick's Anglican Church, Guelph Campus Ministry and the Brant Leadership Team. The group meets to keep everyone informed of the work that is being done, and it seeks to keep partners accountable for good development practices.

**Brant Avenue School**—The elementary school in Brant connects regularly with the BNG and works closely with the other Brant Partners. In 2013, the Brant Partners collectively launched Run & Read—an after school literacy and fitness program. Volunteers from the two local churches and GCM, together with those that come from the other partner organizations, lead this program and make it available to children in grades 3-6.



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### **CONGREGATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; WRAP AROUND**

Shalem Christian Mental Health Association (formerly Salem) realizes that Christians are not exempt from struggling with mental health and painful circumstances such as drug dependency, family violence, attachment disorders, sexual abuse, suicidal tendencies, divorce and grieving. Shalem equips and empowers faith communities to come alongside those who are hurting and vulnerable.

Shalem's programs include:

- Individual, couple and family counseling
- Supporting churches to provide WrapAround
- Congregational Assistance Program (CAP) to provide churches with mental health services to their members
- Restorative Justice Services in communities, schools and churches,
- ReCreate Outreach Art Studio, a drop in studio for street-involved youth
- Darkness into Sunshine, a service for people wanting more information about mental illness.

#### WrapAround

WrapAround is a way for churches to support people struggling with complex needs that often place overwhelming demands on the pastoral care efforts of a congregation. Through Wrap Around a facilitator helps to build a team that will develop and implement a plan to support the person. The person helps determine the members of their team. The approach is based on mobilizing the community to help a person with complex needs determine solutions to their problems and put them in charge of their lives. Shalem can train and provide coaches for the WrapAround facilitators in a church.

In 2013, the Deacons and Pastoral Elders explored whether we wanted to train facilitators and offer official WrapArrounds through New Life with the formal support of Shalem. Currently, the consensus is to follow Wrap principles but to offer our own informal wraps when both deacons and Pastoral Elders are supporting people with complex needs.

#### Congregational Assistance Program (CAP)

Through CAP, New Life Church has contracted Shalem to provide Christian counselling services to those who have made New Life Church their church home. Shalem in turn, has contracted with several therapists in or near Guelph, who are members in good standing with a professional counselling association, have a Master's degree in the field, and a demonstrated commitment to Christ.

Shalem provided brochures, posters and letters to introduce and promote the service at New Life Church. The CAP brochure provides a toll free number for people to call to request counselling services. Any adult or teen at New Life may call this number directly to request an appointment, and Shalem will link them with a local therapist. The cost for counselling sessions attended is covered through the CAP contract, and all information that is shared with the therapists is kept confidential (except when they are required to disclose information by law).

New Life's has had a CAP contract with Shalem since April 2010 to provide services to people



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who have made New Life their church home members (regular attenders). This contract is renewable on an annual basis. Initially, the cost of CAP was covered through the Compassionate Ministries Fund but has since become part of the regular church budget. The CAP fee is based on the number of households in the sponsoring church, and the previous year's utilization rate. It is important to note that the church also pays for some "open" slots should there be community members who the Pastoral Elders or deacons are connecting with and they think this would be a helpful resource for them. If a Pastoral Elder or Deacon does refer a community person to Shalem, they need to call Shalem FIRST and inform them that they are referring a person for one of New Life's open slots, and give Shalem their name. Shalem will then take it from there if the referred person decides to contact Shalem. In this way, as much confidentiality is maintained as possible.

The Pastoral Elders oversee and promote use of the program at New Life. Shalem provides New Life with statistical reports and evaluations of utilization rate, types of concerns and problems presented, incidence of referrals beyond the program and other non-disclosing demographic data.

### **DIACONAL MINISTRIES CANADA**

Diaconal Ministries Canada (DMC) seeks to inspire, equip and encourage deacons, churches and their partners as they join in God's transforming work in communities. Check out the resources available through Diaconal Ministries Canada at [www.diaconalministries.com](http://www.diaconalministries.com). DMC also produces an electronic quarterly newsletter for Deacons, **Partners**, which provides inspirational material and suggestions for new opportunities for ministry.

Each October Diaconal Ministries Canada and Christian Reformed Home Mission offers a **Day of Encouragement** in Ancaster for deacons, elders, caregivers, pastors, as well as any other persons who would like to be encouraged and equipped for ministry.

Through DMC there is also a **Diaconal Ministry Developer** in each classis of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada. The Diaconal Ministry Developers assist deacons in the areas of diaconal service, leadership training, community ministry, life experience and technical skills.

Two programs offered by DMC are Community Opportunity Scan and the Operation Manna program.

A **Community Opportunity Scan** is a guided process for churches who want to find out how God is already doing in their neighbourhoods, help a church better understand their community, reveal ministry opportunities, challenge a church to become involved with their neighbours, and deepen a church's love for those that do not yet know Jesus. New Life Church conducted a Community Opportunity Scan in 2000. Please see Appendix I for a summary of the report our COS.

**Operation Manna** is a program of Diaconal Ministries Canada that provides community ministries with coaching, consultation and equipping in the areas of visioning, board development, strategic planning, networking, goal setting, and evaluation. Operation Manna also provides grants to help community ministries bring about sustainable change in the lives of individuals and the communities in which they live. New Life Church received support from Operation to launch the Collective Kitchens program.



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### ***World Renew (formerly CRWRC)***

World Renew, (the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee) is the relief and development arm of the Christian Reformed Church. World Renew started as a committee of Deacons in the Christian Reformed Church in 1962 as a way of coordinating their response to people affected by the Korean War. It continues to have a special relationship with Deacons. Each Christian Reformed Church is requested to have a “church champion”, either a deacon or someone appointed by the deacons to encourage financial and prayer support of World Renew, and promote volunteer opportunities with World Renew.

World Renew reaches out in God's name to people, both in North America and around the world, who are struggling with poverty, hunger, disaster, and injustice to help them find lasting ways to improve their lives.

Community Development. In this ministry World Renew partners with community organizations in more than 30 countries to train local people to be leaders in their own communities. Together, World Renew and these partners help people work together to overcome illiteracy, hunger, malnutrition, unemployment, HIV & AIDS, child mortality, injustice, and other issues affecting them.

Disaster Response and Rehabilitation. When disasters strike, World Renew responds to the urgent needs that arise. In North America, this often includes clearing debris, assessing needs, training local leaders, and repairing and rebuilding damaged homes. Internationally, it includes providing and distributing emergency food, water, shelter, and other supplies. It also often involves reconstruction of homes and livelihoods.

Engaging people in North America. The third aspect of the ministry of World Renew involves working with people in North America and around the world to connect them to ministry, deepen their understanding of global issues, and encourage them to act and advocate on behalf of those in need.

World Renew does not receive ministry shares and depends on the regular financial support of God's people.



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### ***BENEVOLENT FUND POLICIES***

This Benevolence Policy should be treated as a living, breathing document. It is intended as a resource for the present and future deacons of New Life Christian Reformed Church. All deacons must come to their own individual and collective decisions on the matter of benevolence. Criteria and considerations can and should be amended, added or deleted at any time, and from time to time.

#### **Benevolence Policy – Part 1 Selection of Offering Causes and Cause Disbursement**

##### **Introduction**

Each year the Diaconate of New Life CRC must set out the Offering Schedule for causes for the next following year. This schedule will, of course, suffer a number of scheduling changes throughout the year; however the causes that are originally selected tend, by and large, to remain unchanged from the original schedule. In addition, the New Life CRC Diaconate will at any given time, and from time to time, receive requests from various people (in person or by mail) for offerings, donations or support for causes.

For the purposes of this Benevolence Policy - Part 1, “cause” or “causes” shall refer to any charitable or religious organizations, causes, agencies, missions, camps or programs, whether they are part of New Life, the CRC denomination or otherwise.

It is important for the deacons to appreciate that a person requesting an offering, donation or support in respect of a cause may be an individual or an organization, and may or may not be from New Life or the CRC denomination. Furthermore, an individual may be requesting an offering, donation or support for the cause itself or for him/herself in relation to his/her involvement in a cause (see “Other Considerations” herein below).

##### **The Purpose of this Benevolence Policy - Part 1**

The world is full of innumerable worthy causes, all of which are deserving of both prayer and financial support. No person and no church can possibly give a meaningful amount of financial support to all such causes, and there are a limited number of Sundays in the year on which to schedule offerings. Therefore, this Benevolence Policy - Part 1 is intended to address and set down the practical criteria on which we shall base our decisions for financial support by way of our offerings at New Life CRC and through disbursements from diaconate funds.

Our Benevolence Policy - Part 2 addresses how we shall support individuals in our church and geographic community who are in crisis and who approach us for financial assistance.





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### **The Charge to the Deacons**

From the Charge to the Deacons in the Form for Ordination of Elders and Deacons, we find that Deacons are charged with carrying out various forms of ministry. The more salient charges when considering an offering schedule or disbursement for a cause include the charge to show mercy to the needy, and the charge to weigh the needs of causes and to use the church's resources discerningly. In addition, it is also hoped that the offerings or disbursements themselves, along with our related actions as Deacons, will also assist in part to fulfilling a number of the other charges to the Deacons, such as inspiring faithful stewardship in the congregation, reminding the congregation that much is demanded, providing opportunity to worship God with our financial offerings, inspiring compassion and prophesying as to the waste, injustice and selfishness in our society.

### **Fulfilling the Charge to the Deacons – The Criteria**

New Life CRC Diaconate has set down the following practical criteria (in no particular order) on which we base all of our decisions for financial support of causes by way of the offering schedule and disbursements:

1. We shall support the agencies and offices, and the denominationally related agencies and nondenominationally related agencies of the Christian Reformed Church of North America (the "CRCNA").
2. We shall support our community Christian schools, which include Guelph Community Christian School and Woodland Christian High School, and their respective Tuition Assistance Funds. The Christian Reformed Church denomination and New Life CRC each have a history and a heritage of building schools and promoting education taught and administered from a Christian perspective by Christian teachers and administrators.
3. We shall support the ministries and programs of New Life CRC (i.e. GEMs, Cadets, New Life Summer Youth Projects, Collective Kitchen, Clothing Closet, etc.). Offerings may in certain cases be taken for the benefit of a specific ministry of New Life CRC.
4. We shall support those unrelated ministries, missions and agencies operating within and/or providing services or relief to the people of the City of Guelph and its immediate surrounding area who are in need. We shall assist such organizations in helping the people in our own backyard.

### **Fulfilling the Charge to the Deacons – Other Considerations:**

#### **1. The Role of Offerings in the Worship Service**

In respect of the selection of causes for the Offering Schedule, we believe that, in order to fulfill the charge to the deacons, it is necessary to make the offering a meaningful part of the worship service. It is our prayer that we find success in making the offering a meaningful part of the worship service through our scheduling of specific causes for offering, through the announcements made of upcoming offering causes, through our Deacons' bulletin, through our



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write-up of each specific cause in the weekly bulletin and through our prayer of dedication after each offering.

### **2. Offerings vs. Disbursements**

When considering the support of various causes, it is important for us deacons to appreciate the differences between listing a cause for offering and simply providing a disbursement to a cause.

Firstly, offering proceeds do not get deposited in the deacon's bank account and do not form part of the Diaconate funds or Diaconate budget. Offering proceeds are placed in the church safe by the deacons, counted by the official counters, and then given to the church treasurer. The church treasurer then deposits the money into the church bank account and delivers a cheque to the designated cause. Disbursements for causes, on the other hand, come directly from Diaconate funds/budget.

Secondly, an offering provides more public attention to a particular cause than does a disbursement. Congregation members read the cause on the bulletin; the cause is announced before the collection; the cause may be made known through an announcement or bulletin board; and the cause is prayed for after the collection. Such promotion creates familiarity, education and a connection to the cause amongst congregation members, which cannot be achieved by a simple disbursement from Diaconate funds. Thus, we should consider which causes are important to promote through the Offering Schedule, and/or whether to rotate certain chosen causes on and off the Offering Schedule from year to year.

### **3. The Denominational Causes**

New Life Christian Reformed Church is part of a denomination that requires our support to study and examine God's word and to spread God's word, love and support throughout the world through its own agencies and offices and through its related agencies. The agencies and offices of the CRCNA and the related agencies of the CRCNA can be found at the CRCNA website at [www.crcna.org](http://www.crcna.org). In respect of the Offering Schedule, as there are too many of such agencies, offices and ministries for each year, our offering schedules for certain of such causes may be rotated from year to year. Our offering schedule typically includes offerings as and when suggested on the CRCNA church calendar (also found on its website). Consideration is then given to the fact that certain agencies and offices already receive ministry shares. Consideration is also given to the geographic location of those agencies and offices that are community based, with a preference given to such community ministries operating in Canada and in Ontario.

### **4. Support of Mission Work and Our Missionaries**

New Life Church is a support community for specific missionaries through World Renew (formerly CRWRC) and CRWM (Christian Reformed World Missions). Support of World Renew or CRWM may be directed to these organizations' general funds, which are then directed to areas where needed; to a specific field or project, such as Free a Family or the Canadian Food Grains Bank; or to directly support a specific missionary or missionary family. As long as New Life covenants to support specific missionaries, our donations for World Renew or CRWM that are not designated specifically for a special field project or project should be directed to the



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support of such missionaries. Missionaries may receive monthly donor reports that list the names and amounts of an individual donor or church. This gives the missionaries the opportunity to monitor their support and acknowledge the support of their donors.

### 5. The Congregational Connection to the Cause

It is always important to consider both the wishes of the congregation and the historical connection of the organization with New Life CRC and/or the CRC denomination. Having said this, it is equally important that we as deacons appreciate our leadership role in fulfilling the charge to the deacons, and that we not be unduly influenced by such wishes or historical connections.

### 6. Discernment

We are charged to use the church's resources discerningly.

Firstly, consideration should be given to whether **the work** of an organization is in line with our own calling as servants of God for the benefit of his created people. Further, discretion is used to consider how much of the financial resources reach the people of the community, and to determine which organizations are better equipped than we to meet certain needs of people in our community are. Additional consideration may also be given in favour of those organizations with which we as a Diaconate have partnered to provide services to the people in our community.

Secondly, in seeking to fulfill our commitment to our Benevolence Policy - Parts 1 and 2, we must ensure that we use the monies entrusted to us by the congregation wisely and that our budget remain balanced.

### 7. Requests for Support of Individuals

As indicated hereinabove, our Benevolence Policy - Part 2 addresses how we shall support individuals in our church and geographic community who are in financial crisis, seeking counseling assistance, seeking tuition support and seeking mission support. With the exception of missionaries sponsored by our church through World Renew, CRWM and Christian Reformed Home Missions, offerings shall **not** be taken for the benefit of any specific individual; however those proceeds given by members in the offering to the work of the Diaconate shall, in addition to being used in part as the need exists for those ministries, agencies, organizations and offices indicated hereinabove, be used to assist such individuals in financial need in accordance with our Benevolence Policy - Part 2.

### 8. Sometimes the Answer is "No"

As noted above, the world is full of innumerable worthy causes, all of which are deserving of both prayer and financial support, and no person and no church can possibly give a meaningful amount of financial support to all such causes. After having considered the criteria and other considerations set out herein our Benevolence Policy - Part 1 and 2, sometimes the agonizing truth is that the answer must be "no". In such instances, you may be justified in feeling sorry for the result on behalf of the individual, but you are also justified in making no apologies for the necessary decision to say "no".



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### **Benevolence Policy – Part 2**

#### **Guidelines on Providing Financial Assistance to Individuals**

Deacons are to show compassion and care for the needy, both for those within and those currently beyond our church community. Deacons are to “*realize that benevolence is a quality of our life in Christ and not merely a matter of financial assistance*”. To do this, deacons should listen and hear with caring, respect and compassion the struggles of those in need and not focus just on the presenting problem, respect personal information, pray for those they assist, and point beyond one’s self to God.

The deacons are encouraged to regularly report to each other on financial and other assistance provided to families or individuals in need, and to seek the advice and involvement of the other deacons in responding to those in need.

In cases where there is ongoing financial need, the deacons are encouraged to work with individuals or families to develop a Plan of Action. See Appendix IV. In developing a Plan of Action the individual or family should agree that there are problems with the present situation, and that they want to address them. If the person or family is satisfied with the ways things are, a Plan of Action process will probably not be helpful. For those willing to work through a Plan of Action process, financial assistance may be contingent upon whether the individual or family is working to achieve the agreed upon goals.

The diaconate is encouraged to participate in CORE (Guelph Churches’ Outreach Program) or other community-based programs to keep up-to-date on the services available through other churches and service agencies.

Whenever possible, the deacons will encourage people to use the Clothing Closet and participate in the Collective Kitchens, and will offer Garden Fresh Boxes (available the third Wednesday of each month through the Guelph Community Health Centre), at a reduced cost. The diaconate will encourage and support involvement in the Collective Kitchens program by offering to pay up to half of the participant’s costs. Through their leadership of the Clothing Closet and Collective Kitchens, the Deacons should ensure that these programs can help meet the needs of individuals that request financial assistance from New Life Church.



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### **Providing Financial Assistance to People beyond the New Life Church Community** (Updated March 2013)

If a person contacts New Life Church for assistance, the responding church staff will first ask: "How did you hear about our church?" and "Where do you live?" If the person requesting assistance has a connection to the church or is from the Brant or Waverley neighborhood, church staff will pass on the name and number to the deacons. Other requests will be met with a referral to an appropriate agency in Guelph (usually the Drop In Centre), since in many cases these agencies are better equipped to handle the needs of those requesting assistance from New Life Church. The deacons will be responsible to keep an updated list of these agencies by each phone at New Life Church and will meet with church staff once a year in September to talk through its use. Deacons will also supply make sure that Church staff has a supply of bus tickets on hand for anyone that comes to the church and needs help to get to the referred agency.

For referrals that do go to the diaconate, the following guidelines apply:

Within 24 hours of the initial call to the church, the responding deacon(s), will meet the person requesting assistance at the church when the Clothing Closet is open and/or one of the Collective Kitchen groups is meeting. Otherwise, the responding deacon(s) will meet the individual in some other public place.

The deacon will begin by responding to that person's outstanding need (e.g. bus tickets, gas, and groceries). If possible, any assistance should be given a form that is non-refundable. If the outstanding need is unique, see the next section ("Providing Assistance to People in the Church Community") for guidelines.

If a deacon is not sure about the legitimacy of a need, the deacon will contact staff with the Drop-In Centre, Royal City Church or Brant Neighbourhood Group for advice.

When requests for assistance are repeated, the deacon should assess whether a Plan of Action is warranted, and if so, further assistance may be contingent upon such a plan.

As noted above, the services of a counselor or financial planner may be useful in helping a family define its problems, set goals and identify tasks and opportunities that will get them beyond their current crisis and toward achieving their goals. If the services of a financial planner would be useful to the family or individual in need, the diaconate may engage and, as necessary, pay for these services.

### **Groceries and Food Vouchers**

- In response to requests for food assistance, groceries will normally be provided on a **one-time only basis**.
- This will be based on the guideline of up to \$50 for a person living alone, plus \$25/person for each additional family member, to a maximum of \$150 the first time that a family or individual is provided with assistance.



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- Whenever possible, responding deacon(s) are encouraged to purchase groceries for an individual, rather than supply food vouchers (which are too-easily converted to cash). The amount spent on groceries should be roughly equivalent to that which would be spent on food vouchers.
- The responding deacon(s) will promote the Clothing Closet, Collective Kitchens and Garden Fresh Program, and may encourage their involvement in these programs by subsidizing the costs as outlined above.
- If the recipient of the groceries or food vouchers lives in the Brant neighbourhood, the responding deacon(s) will also make them aware of the services available through the Brant Neighbourhood Group.
- If the individual or family requests assistance with groceries or food vouchers again, the deacons will assess whether a Plan of Action is reasonable, and may provide further assistance contingent on the development and implementation of such a plan. Otherwise, the deacons will respond by offering Garden Fresh boxes and will encourage and support involvement in the Collective Kitchens program.

Deacons may also provide assistance to people beyond the New Life community through referrals from other agencies, such as the Women in Crisis organization. Occasionally a request may come to the church from a support worker to contribute toward helping a woman get into transitional housing. Normally this assistance is not more than \$200. Cheques should be made directly to the housing corporation involved.

Finally, since many people seeking assistance will be referred to the Drop In Centre, the diaconate has included within the Compassionate Ministries budget support specifically for this organization. The Deacons will also encourage members of New Life to volunteer there.

### **Providing Financial Assistance to People in our Church Community**

(not yet updated – to be done in 2013/2014)

Financial assistance to those within the church community will be given at the discretion of the diaconate. Assistance may be provided on a one-time basis, in the form of groceries, food vouchers, and assistance with rent, utilities, medication, transportation, personal care or counseling services.

- In response to requests for assistance with medication, transportation, utilities, rent or other needs, any deacon may spend up to \$100 to support a family or individual in need once.
- In response to requests for medication, transportation, utilities, rent or other needs, any deacon, with the agreement of one other deacon, may spend up to \$250 to support a family or individual in need once.
- In response to requests for assistance with medication, transportation, utilities, rent or other needs, any deacon, with the approval of the full diaconate, can spend more than \$250 on a family in need once.
- In response to requests for assistance with rent or utilities, the responding deacon is encouraged to contact the Drop In Centre for advice. If the person requesting



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assistance is referred to the Drop In Centre for assistance, the rest of the diaconate will be informed.

- Rather than writing cheques to individuals, whenever possible, cheques will be made out to the landlord, utility or telephone company, or medical agency indicated by the person in need.
- At the time that assistance is provide, the responding deacon(s) will promote the Clothing Closet and Collective Kitchens programs, as well as the Garden Fresh Box program.

If assistance is required on a longer-term basis, the deacons are strongly encouraged to complete a Plan of Action with the recipient(s), to guide them how best to assist the family or individual. See Appendix IV.

The services of a counselor or financial planner is often helpful in assisting a family define its problems, set goals and identify tasks and opportunities that will get them beyond their current crisis and toward achieving their goals. If the services of a financial planner would be useful to the family or individual in need, the Diaconate may engage and, as necessary, pay for these services.

Confidentiality is extremely important in assisting those within our church community. In certain circumstances, and **only** with the recipient's consent, the congregation may be made aware of a need for prayer and financial support.

The church community should be regularly reminded that they should not hesitate to approach the Diaconate when there is a financial need in their life or in the life of someone they know in our church or wider community.

### **Counseling Assistance**

When counseling is needed, the recipient will be encouraged to call CAP and will be given a brochure with information on this service. See pages 17 and 18 in this handbook for more information on CAP.

### **Tuition Support**

Through regular offerings members of New Life Church are encouraged to support the Tuition Assistance Funds of Guelph Community Christian School and Woodland Christian High School. Parents who find that tuition is providing a financial hardship for their families are encouraged to apply for tuition assistance offered through each of the schools. If the cost of tuition for Christian education leaves parents in arrears, the diaconate, on behalf of New Life Church, may assist in paying rent and/or utilities. If the family continues to fall behind it is advisable to prepare a Plan of Action with the family.

### **Christmas Baskets**

To assist families in need with the added expenses associated with their Christmas celebrations, the diaconate has a Christmas basket program. These baskets are given to those in need within our church community, and to families or individuals with whom the deacons have had regular contact during the past year. Food vouchers may be included with these baskets. The amount of the vouchers is decided on a yearly basis; in general \$50 for an individual and \$25 for each additional person in the household. Families in need are also encouraged to apply for the



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Christmas hampers distributed by the Salvation Army and other neighbourhood agencies in Guelph. The diaconate may also contribute names of financially stressed families or individuals (of Dutch origin) to the Nederlandse Bazaar, another organization that distributes Christmas baskets.

### **Support from the Compassionate Ministries Fund for Youth Involved in a Mission or Service Trip (Updated March 2012)**

To encourage our youth to participate in mission and service trips, programs and projects, the Deacons may assist them to raise funds within the church community and/or provide some financial support. This support through the Compassionate Ministries Fund is intended to inspire compassion in the participant, and encourage him/her to gain a better understanding and discernment in their response to the waste, injustice and selfishness present in our society and in the world.

Generally the Deacons approve up to \$250 for participation in a mission or service trip, project or activity of one month or less, and will consider requests for more support for experiences of a longer duration.

Some of the criteria the Deacons consider in approving requests for financial support are:

- Is this a project or program of New Life Church or an activity encouraged by a ministry of the church?
- Is this a project or program directly related to a Christian Reformed Church agency?
- Is this a project or program with Christian roots?
- Is this a project or program that will directly benefit Guelph and our neighbouring community?
- Does this project have a youth or a food sufficiency aspect?

Those requesting short-term mission funds are asked to write a letter to the Deacons prior to their regular April and October meetings:

- Explaining the project/trip in which they plan to participate;
- Describing what they hope to learn from the experience and what they hope to give to others;
- Outlining the efforts they are making to raise their own funds and their request to the Deacons;
- Indicating how they might share their experience with New Life.





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### **OFFERING DESCRIPTIONS** Updated – September 2013

*Ministry Shares support denominational agencies and ministries. Ministry shares are usually part of the approved budget of churches and support denominational agencies and ministries. It is recommended by Synod that these causes receive one or more offerings per year for “above ministry share” needs.*

*Other Causes receive no ministry share support and include the denominational agencies and ministries such as the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee and Diaconal Ministries Canada, non denominational and local causes.*

#### **Our Missionaries:**

**Peter Timmerman.** New Life Church has committed to being a supporting church for Peter Timmerman, who has recently accepted the position of Southern Africa Team Leader with **World Renew**. We look forward to supporting Peter and his family with our words of encouragement, prayers and financial support.

**Jamie Vanderberg** serves with **Christian Reformed Home Missions** as a campus chaplain at the University of Guelph. Jamie meets with students, staff and faculty to encourage them to grow in their faith, build Christian community, and bear witness to the renewing grace of Jesus Christ among the diverse perspectives and world views on campus.

#### **Other Causes:**

**40 Baker Street**, is a centre in downtown Guelph that provides food, shelter and support for street involved youth. Our own youth group and a number of people from New Life Church have been involved there is a variety of support roles in previous years.

**Aboriginal Ministries** is a ministry of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada that responds to the spiritual and social needs of aboriginal Canadians through three urban ministries: the Indian Family Centre in Winnipeg, the Indian Metis Christian Fellowship in Regina and the Edmonton Native Healing Centre in Edmonton. These are multi-service centres that strive to help aboriginal Canadians live dignified and harmonious lives. Urban Aboriginal Ministries also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.

**[Back to God Ministries International](#)** is the multi-media ministry of the Christian Reformed Church, proclaiming the gospel in nine languages using radio, internet, telephone, e-mail, television and print. [The English Ministry](#) team produces [The Back to God Hour radio program](#), the [Today daily devotional](#) and the [Kids Corner radio program](#). BTGMI also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.

**Beginnings Pregnancy Care Centre** in Guelph provides services to women and their families coping with an unplanned pregnancy. Beginnings is a non-profit Christian agency whose services include pregnancy testing, options information, pregnancy support, a care cupboard,



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parenting support, adoption planning, post-abortion support and referrals to community agencies.

The **Calvinist Cadet Corps** is an independent (non-denominational) youth ministry organization whose purpose is to provide the local church with a ministry program that will enable them to effectively share Christ's love with boys from their church and community. The organization uses the title "Calvinist" to honour the Protestant reformer, John Calvin, who devoted his life to the religious education of God's children.

**Calvin Theological Seminary**, located in Grand Rapids, Michigan, provides training for ministers of the Christian Reformed Church, as well as evangelists, church planters, ministers of education, youth pastors, and other specialized ministries not requiring ordination. Calvin Theological Seminary also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.

**Calvin College**, a ministry of the Christian Reformed Church, is located in Grand Rapids, Michigan and seeks to engage students in a vigorous liberal-arts education with an intentional Reformed vision that promotes and prepares students for lifelong Christian service. Calvin College also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.

The **Canadian Foodgrains Bank** is a partnership of fifteen Canadian church agencies, including World Renew (formerly the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee), that provide a Christian response to hunger. On behalf of its members, CFGB collects grain and cash donations with which it purchases food, and distributes these through projects sponsored by its members. The federal government, through the Canadian International Development Agency, will match funding of up to \$25 million annually to CFGB, often at a ratio of 4 to 1, for donations received by the CFGB and its member organizations for food distribution projects.

**Chaplaincy and Care Ministries** supports chaplains who serve in specialized settings, such as prisons, hospitals, counseling centers, and the military. They have a dual role of ministering on behalf of the church and are part of a professional team within their institution. Chaplains are available to those who are suffering, alienated, confused and struggling, and offer resources and guidance that lead towards spiritual renewal and reconciliation with God. Chaplaincy and Care Ministry supports chaplains and their families, participates in national/state/provincial chaplaincy organizations and supports prospective candidates with training. This ministry also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.

**Christian Horizons** is a non-profit, Christian charitable organization that reaches out with supports and friendship to persons who have exceptional needs. Their purpose is to contribute to the exceptional person's quality of life by addressing spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social and physical needs in a manner that considers each person's intrinsic value as loved by God and bearing His image.

**Christian Reformed Home Missions** provides leadership assistance for evangelism and discipleship that encourages every Christian Reformed church, ministry, and member to follow Christ in reconciling the world to God. Home Missions works in five areas that relate to this



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gospel witness: focusing churches on mission, helping plant new churches, assisting campus ministries, training mission leaders, and encouraging small groups and prayer. Christian Reformed Home Missions also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.

**Christian Reformed World Missions** seeks to fulfill the Great Commission by sending missionaries to 25 countries and by partnering with churches and organizations, here and abroad, to build the Church of Jesus Christ and extend the Kingdom of God all around the world. In the past, New Life Church has directly supported missionaries working under the auspices of Christian Reformed World Missions. Christian Reformed World Missions also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.

**Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ)** is a national organization inspired by Christian faith to act for justice in Canadian public policy. CPJ shapes key public policy debates through research and analysis, publishing and public dialogue. Supported through memberships and donations, CPJ encourages citizens, leaders in society and governments to support policies and practices which reflect God's call for love, justice and stewardship.

**Diaconal Ministries Canada** assists deacons in the Christian Reformed Church in Canada to help them effectively carry out their ministries of mercy and encouragement, and to be effective in spurring people in their congregations to worship God with offerings of wealth, time and ability. The deacons and pastoral elders of New Life Church benefit from the resources and training provided by Diaconal Ministries Canada. DMC also receives financial support through a contribution from the Deacons' Fund of New Life Church.

**Disability Concerns** seeks to end the isolation and disconnectedness of persons with disabilities and their families, further the spiritual lives of people with disabilities so that they are active members of their churches, and encourage the gifts of people with disabilities so that they can serve God fully in their churches. Disability Concerns produces the newsletter *Breaking Barriers* and works in Christian Reformed Churches through a network of 550 church representatives. This Ministry also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.

**EduDeo Ministries** is a Canadian Christian mission organization serving children in developing countries with quality education rooted in a Biblical worldview. Our approach includes accessibility for all children, teacher training, curriculum development and school construction. We promote sustainable schools by partnering with school associations and mission organizations that share our vision of Evangelism and Education.

**Family Outreach Ontario** is a volunteer organization that serves families and individuals in many Ontario communities who suffer from the disease of alcoholism or other drug addiction. This organization offers realistic hope and appropriate support, as well as raising awareness in the Christian community about addictions.

The **Guelph Friendship Club** shares God's love with people who have intellectual disabilities and enables them to be an active part of God's family. The club provides an encouraging place for Bible study, fellowship and special events.



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**GEMS Girls' Clubs** is a relationship building program for girls in grades one through eight. GEMS clubs are offered in Christian Reformed churches and other Christian organizations in Canada and the United States. In GEMS, girls participate in team building; enjoy dynamic singing, creative movement and dance; develop life skills through badge work; learn how to apply the Bible to their lives; make creative and fun crafts; participate in service projects; and develop responses to challenges that girls face today.

The **Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis** helps women on their journey from crisis to confidence. They provide emergency housing, one-to-one counseling, support groups, and other services to women who are experiencing physical, sexual, emotional and verbal abuse. Services include Marianne's Place shelter, Transitional and Housing Support Program, Rural Women's Support Program, Sexual Assault Centre and a 24-hour Crisis Line.

**Homestead Christian Care**, located in Hamilton, is a non-profit charitable organization primarily serving those with mental illness through affordable housing and rehabilitation services. Homestead's goal is to restore hope and dignity to people living with mental illness. Homestead assists residents in meeting personal recovery goals and improving quality of life through life skills training, social involvement, and spiritual growth.

The **Institute for Christian Studies** is a Christian graduate school that addresses the spiritual foundations of learning and equips Christians around the world to be effective leaders in the academic arena and in other areas of society. ICS is an Affiliated Member of the Toronto School of Theology at the University of Toronto.

**KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives** is inspired by a vision of God's compassionate justice for all people and a respect for the creation. KAIROS effects social change through advocacy, education and research programs in Ecological Justice, Economic Justice, Energy Extraction, Human Rights, Just and Sustainable Livelihoods, and Indigenous Peoples. Kairos is a network of 21 partner organizations in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East; about eighty local grassroots groups across Canada; as well as many individuals, organizations and churches (including the Christian Reformed Church of North America).

**Michael House** provides housing and services to young pregnant women in the Guelph and surrounding area so that they can manage their pregnancies within their own community and access resources during their pregnancy to prepare them for life after the birth of their child. Michael House is a non-denominational agency based in Guelph.

**New Life Summer Youth Projects** assists the New Life Church youth group to participate in a week-long service projects during the summer. Your gifts help to offset the costs involved in this ministry.

The **Office of Social Justice** is a ministry of the Christian Reformed Church that responds to God's call to let justice flow like a river in our personal and communal lives, especially as it relates to hunger and poverty. The Office of Social Justice educates members of the church, encourages and supports their engagement in social justice issues, and is occasionally involved in direct advocacy. This Ministry also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.



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**Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS)** provides leadership, curriculum resources and programs for Christian schools in Ontario. Located in Ancaster, Ontario, the OACS is made up of 79 schools educating 14,000 students.

**Operation Manna** is a program of Diaconal Ministries Canada that partners with Christian Reformed Churches and affiliated organizations to provide funding and development services for community outreach ministries. Projects supported through Operation Manna include youth drop-in centres, job-readiness training, community outreach coordinators, crisis pregnancy centres, and community kitchens - including the start-up of our own Collective Kitchens program at New Life Church.

The Ministry of **Pastor-Church Relations** provides programs of prevention and healing for ministers, staff, consistories and congregations of the Christian Reformed Church. The ministry of Pastor-Church Relations serves as a resource to pastors, staff ministry leaders, and congregations in areas such as intervention, consultation, education, leadership development, and staff support. Activities include the appointment of regional pastors in each classis to support their colleagues, the planning for pastor-relations committees in congregations, and mentoring for new pastors. This ministry also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.

The Ministry of **Race Relations** initiates and provides training and programs to mobilize Christian Reformed congregations and members to recognize, expose, and dismantle all forms of racism and to experience reconciliation as a diverse and unified people of God. Promotion of multi-ethnic Christian celebrations is an aspect of its ministry, as well as providing resources to congregations to celebrate All Nations Heritage Week. This ministry also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.

**Redeemer University College** is an undergraduate Christian liberal arts and science university based on a comprehensive vision of Christ's lordship and redemptive work. Located in Ancaster, Ontario, Redeemer is funded through tuition, memberships and donations, including a contribution from our Ministry Shares which are directed to Redeemer University College in lieu of Calvin College.

The **Royal City Life Centre** is a downtown mission in Guelph which seeks to provide a safe and loving environment for everyone, including those who are lonely, hurting, or in financial crises. Street Outreach has become a vital part of their mission. This ministry takes many forms, from taking people to the hospital, to warming people up with a hot drink, or giving them a needed toque or a pair of dry socks.

The **Safe Church Ministry** of the Christian Reformed Church creates awareness of the various forms of abuse that affect all age groups; encourages churches and communities to prevent abuse and to respond justly and effectively following disclosure of an incident of abuse; and provides consultation, training, resource development, policy formation, and trains Safe Church Teams. This ministry also receives financial support through the New Life Church contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.



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**Shalem Christian Mental Health Association** realizes that Christians are not exempt from struggling with mental health and painful circumstances such as drug dependency, family violence, attachment disorders, sexual abuse, suicidal tendencies, divorce and grieving. Shalem equips and empowers faith communities to come alongside those who are hurting and vulnerable. Shalem's programs include individual, couple and family counseling; supporting churches to provide the Congregational Assistance Program (CAP) and WrapAround. Shalem also supports Restorative Justice Services, ReCreate Outreach Art Studio; and Darkness into Sunshine, a service which shares information about mental illness. For more information visit [www.shalemnetwor.org](http://www.shalemnetwor.org).

The Guelph Community Christian School and Woodland Christian High School **Tuition Bursary Funds** helps children to receive a Christian education by assisting parents that have difficulty paying the full tuition. Parents apply for and are awarded bursaries through these funds on an annual basis.

The **Welcome In Drop-In Centre**, on Gordon Street provides nutritious meals, friendship, support and guidance to hundreds of Guelph residents every day. The Drop-In Centre is a haven and a caring community for those suffering from mental illness, isolation and economic marginalization.

The **Last Month's Rent Fund** is a service provided through the Drop-In Centre that assists people in Guelph to obtain housing by providing financial assistance for a last month's rent deposit and/or HALF of a required hydro deposit. The Drop-In Centre will also phone landlords and other services to advocate for individuals requiring housing support or assistance with hydro and gas.

**World Literature Ministries**, a division of Faith Alive Christian Resources (CRC Publications), translates and publishes Reformed theological books in many languages. The highest demand has been for Spanish-language materials—more than 30,000 books go out each year to church leaders and seminary students in Latin America and the United States. Faith Alive Christian Resources also receives support from New Life Church through our contribution toward Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.

**World Renew** (formerly the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee) is an agency of the deacons of the Christian Reformed Church that responds with program of relief and rehabilitation to people affected by disasters. World Renew also works with community and church partners in 38 countries developing agriculture, health, literacy, business development, diaconal training and justice education programs. World Renew does not receive Ministry Shares through the Christian Reformed Church.

In response to natural disasters, like floods and earthquakes and disasters caused by civil unrest, World Renew **Disaster Response Services** organize a wide variety of disaster relief and rehabilitation projects to enable those who are affected to get back on their feet again. These projects range from food distribution, shelter and latrine construction, needs assessment, reconstruction of flood-damaged homes and spiritual care.



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**Free A Family** is an alternative to child sponsorship offered through World Renew that enables North Americans to support entire families living in poverty. This support helps families learn how to read and write, start a business, send their children to school, and care for their families' health. At the same time, North American supporters benefit from learning about and praying for a specific family, as they follow that family's progress for many years.

**Embrace AIDS** is a program of World Renew to support those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. Through World Renew's community development programs, people are educated about the disease; church leaders and government officials are encouraged to help break down the stigma associated with it; churches and their members are encouraged to pray for those infected, their families and care givers; and Christians are encouraged to provide financial support to expand existing HIV and AIDS programs and launch new ones.

**Refugee Sponsorship.** Canada is the only country that allows private organizations to sponsor refugees. World Renew, on behalf of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada, is a sponsorship agreement holder, and works with local churches, such as New Life Church, to bring refugees to Canada and provide them with housing, supplies, and fellowship during their first year here. Over the past 30 years, World Renew (which was CRWRC) has helped to bring approximately 2,500 refugee families or about 6,850 people to Canada. The refugee sponsorship groups at New Life Church have sponsored a family from Kosovo and a family from Rwanda, and in 2013, a family from Iraq.

**World Hunger.** The CRC both strives to feed the hungry in the short term and to address the root causes of hunger. To reform systemic injustices that keep people in hunger, Christians are called to advocate for just and equitable policies on issues that impact food security. Foreign aid is one crucial way in which Canadian and US policies have a tremendous impact on the well-being of millions of hungry people. In addition to famine relief, both countries provide foreign aid for investment in the agricultural development of developing countries.

**Youth Unlimited**, the youth ministry of the Christian Reformed Church, is committed to supporting the local church youth ministry in reaching youth with the dynamic power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This ministry seeks to serve youth groups in diverse social and ethnic contexts. It organizes an annual youth convention, service opportunities and leadership training. Dynamic youth ministries and Youth Unlimited do not receive financial support through Ministry Shares of the Christian Reformed Church.



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### COMMUNITY RESOURCES

In many cases there are agencies in Guelph better equipped to handle the needs of those calling for assistance. Those with needs should seek help from these agencies first. These agencies can also help the deacons in deciding how to best assist a given need, and to help confirm the legitimacy of need.

<b>Agencies</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone #</b>
The Drop-In Centre (and help with rent)	23 Gordon St	837-0080
Food Bank	100 Crimea	767-1380
Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services	86 Gordon	822-7500
Guelph Social Services	138 Wyndham St N	837-5492
Guelph Health Unit	125 Delhi	821-2370
Salvation Army Store	257 Woodlawn Rd W	836-6316
Salvation Army After Hours Emergency		766-6327
Women in Crisis Guelph (24-hr crisis line)		836-5710
Guelph Office; Rural Women's Shelter Program		800-265-7233
Marianne's Place		836-5710
Sexual Assault Centre		823-5806
Men's Help Line	PO Box 6	767-6074

In response to the growing need for assistance within the community, some Guelph Churches formed the CORE group to address the issue. The result has been the formulation of an assistance policy which will, hopefully, address some of the needs, although on an emergency basis only.

### Guelph CORE\* Program (Churches' OutREach)

#### A COVENANT FOR PARTICIPATING CONGREGATIONS & PARTNERS

*"God... executes justice for the fatherless and the widow,  
and loves...the strangers, providing them food and clothing.  
You shall also love the stranger..." – Deuteronomy 10:18-19a*  
*Jesus said, "...I was hungry and you gave me food,  
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,  
I was a stranger and you welcomed me,  
I was naked and you gave me clothing  
...just as you did it to one of the least of these...you did it to me."*  
*– Matthew 25: 35-36, 40*

In response to the biblical mandate to care for those in need, the participating congregations in the Guelph CORE (Churches' OutREach) Program have agreed to work together, sharing resources and information to better address the needs and respond to requests for assistance from those in need within our own community.





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Participating congregations will accept the premise that the privilege of referring those in need to other churches and services carries with it the obligation to support those services (e.g., by financial gifts or gifts in kind)

Participating congregations will facilitate partnering opportunities in responding to larger requests for assistance (e.g., housing, heating bills, etc.).

Participating congregations agree to keep a record of assistance given, and to share that information on a regular basis through the Salvation Army Family Services office.

Participating congregations will treat all clients with dignity and respect, and will err on the side of generosity when in doubt concerning a particular request.

Participating congregations are defined as those accepting the CORE Program Policy and

Guidelines, and as such will have access to a regularly updated service referral list.

Representatives of the participating congregations will meet initially on a quarterly basis.

## **Guelph CORE\* Program**

### **Suggested Guidelines for Responding to Requests for Assistance**

- An up to date brochure will be maintained of types assistance available through participating churches and partners.
- Appropriate referrals will be made when a church is unable to respond to a request.
- ID may be required from all clients when assistance is given.
- Clients will be advised that information is being recorded and may shared by participating churches and/or partners.
- A record will be kept of assistance given.
- Such records will be shared with all participating churches and partners if requested.
- Participating churches will clearly state and/or post types of assistance available from them.
- NO CASH is dispensed. Participating churches will not give out cash, or gift cards as regular practice.



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### **SAFE VISITING GUIDELINES\***

\* Needs to be reviewed to conform with the New Life Safe Church Policy

1. When making a first time visit, two people should go, one male and one female when possible. The second person does not have to be a deacon.
2. For ANY visit, inform someone about where you are going. Provide a name, address, phone number and the approximate time you expect to be there. Check in with that person when you have completed your visit.
3. Purses, wallets etc should be left at home or locked into a trunk.
4. Carry a cell phone if possible.
5. Avoid entering a person's home. Arrange to visit in a public place i.e. at a Tim Horton's or at church when a Collective Kitchen is running or the Clothing Closet is open.



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### Offer Yourself

#### Needs Assessment and Opportunities Scan

With the move to the current location, the Deacons at New Life started to ask the questions, what are the needs of our neighbours, and how can we at New Life use the gifts that God has given us to provide a loving response to these needs?

To help answer these questions, the Deacons were encouraged by Diaconal Ministries Canada to conduct a needs assessment and community opportunity scan. New Life was one of the first diaconates to conduct such a scan. The Deacons brought together a group of people in the fall of 2000 with the purpose of finding out more about our neighbours and their needs, and to suggest ways that we at New Life can become partners with them in responding to their needs.

From January to June, 2001 the needs assessment group looked at demographic information, did a survey of our congregation to determine our church members interest in different service opportunities, and had a series of conversations with community leaders, neighbourhood groups, service agencies and other churches. The purpose of these conversations was to learn more about our neighbourhood and the work of the service agencies listen for significant needs, and ask for suggestions as to how our church members can be involved in meeting these needs.

**Demographic Profile.** A large proportion of our neighbours in the Brant and Waverly neighbourhoods work in manufacturing or other industries. The unemployment rate is relatively low. Average individual incomes are also relatively low, and about half of the women are in the workforce. There are mostly intact families, and average household size is larger than the city or provincial averages. About 20% are seniors. House values and rental rates are low for the city. Most of our neighbours have some religious affiliation, with the largest numbers belonging to the Roman Catholic and United Churches.

**Learning More About New Life's Members.** God has gifted New Life and the church members with a variety of gifts, skills, experiences and interests. Church members are engaged in a wide range of activities within our church, in other churches, with service agencies and providing one-to-one support. Still, over half of the people that responded to the *Offer Yourself* survey indicated that they would like to be more involved in service ministries. Administrative support, working with children, and visiting the elderly, sick and shut-ins interested the most people, closely followed by women's ministries and doing home maintenance and repairs.

#### **Conversations with Community Leaders, Neighbourhood Groups and Service**

**Agencies.** The needs assessment group had conversations with seven community leaders, the Brant and Waverly Neighbourhood groups and seven service agencies. This proved to be a very positive experience - both for the people from New Life and for the people with whom we spoke. We learned a lot about the service agencies, and the schools and other churches in our city, and particularly in the Brant and Waverly neighbourhoods.

By conducting the needs study and opportunities scan, we have come to know our community better, and they have come to know New Life Church better.

**Recommended Activities.** As expected the needs assessment and opportunities scan identified far more needs and opportunities than we, as a church community, can reasonably address. It was a difficult task to select a small number of activities that link the strengths of New Life church and the needs of other people in our neighbourhood. In choosing the recommended activities the group conducting the community opportunity scan tried to identify opportunities for a variety of ministry approaches and diverse entry points (for example,



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promoting some volunteer opportunities with existing agencies, linking up with another agency or ministry as partners and initiating a new area of ministry). We also considered gifts, abilities and areas of ministry of interest to New Life's members. And most important, we tried to identify activities, or areas of need, that we as a church should consider to make a real difference in our community in one, three and ten years. The result was the following five recommended activities.

\* **Promote and support volunteer placements with VON.** As an initial or launch activity in fall 2001, promote volunteer placements of New Life members with the VON. VON is an agency that provides good volunteer support services and supports seniors with limited mobility.

Current Status: There was some confusion as to who would take the lead on this activity, and as a result it was not actively promoted at New Life.

\* **Continue and expand involvement with Brant and Waverly Neighbourhood Groups.**

Continue the Clothing Closet and the involvement of church members in the homework club, invite the neighbourhood groups to make more use of our church building, and explore more joint programs with them.

Current Status: The Deacons value the relationships they have developed with the Brant Neighbourhood Group, and participate and support activities of the Brant Neighbourhood Group. Examples are the back to school back pack drive, food drives for the Food Cupboard, participation in the annual Brant Neighbourhood children's' party, and support for the BNG snack program. Members of New Life have also participated in the Brant Avenue School homework club and FAST (Families and Schools Together) program. The Deacons at New Life purchase and provide free vegetables to both the Brant and Waverley Neighbourhood groups through the Community Health Centre's Garden Fresh box program. While New Life has less involvement with the Waverly Neighbourhood Group, they occasionally refer community members to New Life for possible assistance.

**The Clothing Closet** was initially a joint endeavor between New Life and the Brant Neighbourhood Group. It has become an active ministry of New Life, under the guidance of the Deacons. The Clothing Closet is currently open on Thursday and Saturday mornings and provides free clothing to people in our community. The Clothing Closet Coordinator is Gretchen Van Arragon. The salary for this position is part of the church budget, and expenses for this ministry are allocated to the Compassionate Ministries Fund.

**The Collective Kitchen** was a program started by the Deacons at New Life in 2002 in response to the recommendation in the Community Opportunity Scan. Through this program, run from New Life Church's kitchen which involves members of the church as well as those in the wider community, people meet together to cook meals for themselves and their family. Through their involvement in the collective kitchens, the cooks are enhancing their ability to plan and cook low-cost, nutritious food, fostering their decision making skills and developing social support networks.

The Deacons received a grant from Operation Manna (a program of Diaconal Ministries Canada) in 2003, 2004 and 2005 to support hiring a coordinator to develop and promote this ministry. The Coordinator's salary is now part of the New Life church budget, and expenses for this ministry are covered by the Compassionate Ministries Fund. Judy Eising, Eva Joosse and



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Harmina Van Arragon have served as Collective Kitchen Coordinators. The program is currently coordinated by Jeanette Ensing.

**\* Engage New Life members in Social Justice Initiatives.** Provide information to New Life on social justice issues and how they can help to provide a Christian response to these issues, particularly with respect to children in poverty.

Current Status: The deacons periodically provide information to the congregation from Kairos, Citizens for Public Justice, the Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice and Hunger Action. There is continued interest in more actively promoting and involving members at New Life in local justice initiatives. Subsequent Deaconates have suggested that food justice might be a focus, given our Collective Kitchens ministry and our involvement in the Garden Fresh Box program, Food Accessibility Working Group, and regular food drives and food purchases for the Brant Neighbourhood Group.

**\* Develop Community Youth Programming.** Develop youth programming and activities for the youth in the neighbourhood in concert with developing programming for the youth of our church.

Current Status: This recommendation was referred to the Visionary Elders, at their suggestion, for consideration as part of their deliberations regarding the development of youth programming within New Life Church.

*There is a binder in the deacons' materials containing the copies of the full report of the Needs Assessment and Opportunities Scan. The people that conducted the needs assessment were Dennis Joosse and Peter Zwart on behalf of the deacons, Mike Whitehead on behalf of the visionary elders, Rose Bouwers, Judy Eising and Mandy Ellis. Ben VandeZande from the Christian Reformed Church Diaconal Ministries provided expert guidance and suggestions, and Davaleen Boyd, Judy Miedema and Pastor Henry Lunshof participated in the conversations with community leaders and service agencies.*



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### ***SAMPLE AGENDA FOR DEACONS' MEETINGS***

#### ***1. Mutual Support and Devotions***

Devotions  
Share Time  
Prayer

#### ***2. Develop Vision and Understanding***

We need to deepen our understanding of the deacon's calling and generate new ministries for ourselves and the congregation.

- e.g.
- In Touch or Partners
  - Resource Manual or Books
  - Videos
  - Discuss new ministry possibilities
  - Promote existing ministries

#### ***3. Encouragement and Accountability***

Reports on monthly activities

- Before each meeting, all deacons account for distributed funds via e-mail to the chair or secretary of deacons. This information is placed on a chart and presented at the meeting.
- Situations which deacons consider difficult or worrisome are discussed at the meeting.

#### ***4. Taking care of business***

- Review of Minutes
- Treasurer's report
- Correspondence
- Duty and collection schedule
- Other
- Next meeting --place, date and time, devotions by



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***SAMPLE MONTHLY DEACON'S REPORT***

Deacon's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_\_

1. List the families that you visited, helped, or had someone else help during this month. Give a brief description of what was done. Include the names of church members who assisted you in your diaconal work.

2. Describe other diaconal work that you did or that you organized. Include visits to the Drop-In Centre, meetings with deacons of other churches, meetings of prison ministry, etc., and reading/self development.

3. What frustrations, barriers or problems did you face in your diaconal work this month?

4. What recommendations do you have for the diaconate this month?

5. What education or training do you or church members need to become more effective in your ministries of mercy?

6. How did you feel about being a deacon this month?



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***SAMPLE PLAN OF ACTION : Working Together for Growth and Change***

**A. Where do you want to be?**

How would you like your life situation to be different or improved four months from now?

**B. What are your strengths and abilities?**

What are some of the strengths and abilities that you have that could help you get to where you want to be?

**C. What things can you do?**

Identify a specific goal. Who will do it when? When it will be done? When will you know you have accomplished this goal?

**D. What could stop you?**

What are the obstacles that could get in your way, what are going to do to stop address meet them?

**E. What support do you need?**

How can the deacons, other church members, or community resources help you get to where you want to be?

**F. When can we get together again to check how things are going?**





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### **FOR DEACONS WHO LIKE TO READ**

#### **Culture and Leadership**

1. *When Helping Hurts, How To Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor... And Yourself* - **Steve Corbett & Brian**
2. *Becoming a Church that Makes a Difference: A Guide to the Holistic Ministry Journey* - **Heidi Unruh, Ron Sider, Phil Olson**
3. *Responsible Living in an Age of Excuses* – Kurt Bruner: Moody Press; Identifies the subtle forces that have compromised faith and Christian witness
4. *Values Driven Leadership* – Aubrey Malphurs; Baker Books; Understanding and developing core ministry values – includes discussion questions
5. *The Making of a Leader* – J. Robert Clinton – Stages of Leadership Development
6. *Guiding the Faith Journey* – Neil deKoning
7. *The Irresistible Revolution, living as an ordinary radical*, - Shane Caliborne

#### **Practical Deaconing**

8. *Servant Leaders, A Practical Guide for Deacons* – **Ben VandeZande**
9. *The Deacon's handbook* – **Lori Wiersma and Connie Kuiper VanDyke**
10. *Changing Times – New Approaches* – Jay Van Groningen; A must read for every new deacon. Identifies the changes and suggests the approaches
11. *90% of Helping is Showing Up* – James Kok; Stories that communicate how we care, and how we communicate Christ's care
12. *Beyond the Agenda* – Jessie Schut; For every deacons' chairperson, a variety of 32 devotionals to focus the thoughts of the group on Jesus and not just the meeting at hand
13. *Diakonia* – Jaap Van Klingen; Eerdmans; Biblical mandates, understanding the history and meaning of the term "diakonia" and its variations, this study of the diaconate illustrates how diaconal work is a joint and mutual undertaking in which the helper and the helped learn from each other
14. *How to Mobilize Church Volunteers* – Marlene Wilson
15. *The Ministry of Listening* – Donald Peel; Anglican Book Centre, Toronto; The focus of the visiting and listening in this book is on hospital visiting, but is very helpful for many other kinds of situations. The technique is "creative listening"
16. *Firstfruits-Managing the Master's Money* – Lillian Grissen: Barnabas Foundation; Probably on most deacons' bookshelves already – a good book on biblical and practical stewardship
17. *Improving Your Serve* – Charles Swindoll; Word Publishing; About the nature and attributes of true servanthood



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18. Restorers of Hope – Amy Sherman; Crossway Books; “Reaching into the community with church –based ministries that work”
19. Resources for Deacons Love Expressed – Timothy Keller: Presbyterian Church USA; already an old book, it holds up biblical diaconal principles, organizing for ministry, program development, and some case studies
20. Helping a Neighbor in Crisis - Lisa Barnes Lampman; Tyndale Publishers; Helpful Instructions on crisis intervention, stages of grief, tools of forgiveness. Also chapters on what to say, or what to do and encourage when you don't know what to say in various situations
21. Mobilizing for Compassion, Moving People into Ministry – Robert Logan and Larry Short; Baker Books; Vision and passion combine to create passionate people who receive a renewed sense of calling in the community
22. Creative Training Techniques Handbook – Robert Pike: Lakewood Books; How to develop a useful and dynamic presentation, how to's and tips to be an effective trainer
23. 101 Ways to Help People in Need – Steve and Jamie Sjogren; Navpress; Relief projects, reconstruction ideas, reconciliation opportunities, relocation to being world changers – practical, do-able ideas for deacons
24. Churches that Make a Difference – Ron Sider, Philip Olson and Heidi Unruh; Baker Books; Explores the biblical mandate and how-to's of developing and maintaining an effective holistic ministry that combines evangelism and social outreach

### **Addressing Poverty**

25. Poor Bashing – The Politics of Exclusion – Jean Swanson; Between the Lines, Toronto; A caustic look at language, politics, organization and churches that do a disservice to the poor
26. Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger – Ronald Sider; Inter-Varsity Press; Are we really, as first world rich Christians, *responsible* for world hunger?
27. The Rich and the Poor – Bryant Meyers; Orbis Books, World Vision; What is becoming the definitive book on true transformational development. A challenging but rewarding read
28. And Who is My Neighbour? – Gerald Schlabach; Herald Press (Available through CSS); allows us to step into the world of the poor and their reality, what Jesus cared about, and encourages groups to begin to develop into agents of change
29. Let Justice Roll Down – John Perkins; The story of the man John Perkins, his tremendous faith journey, his testing in the bed of fire, and the emergence of Christian Community Development Organizations
30. Beyond Charity – John Perkins; Continued story and challenges
31. A Quiet Revolution- John Perkins