

2007 Annual Report

OUR MISSION

Our Place Society (OPS) works in compassionate Christian love with those who are homeless and others in need to enrich and improve the lives of all.

OPS is the Alliance of the Open Door Inner City Ministry and the Upper Room Society and continues to maintain their activities and services – a drop-in center, transitional housing and a soup kitchen.

BOARD

Dennis Anholt, Ruth Elvey, Don Fletcher (Vice Chair), Paul Jenkins, Bruce Jordan (Secretary), Karen Preston (Treasurer), Elmarie Roberts (Recording Secretary), John Ronald (Chair), Lawrence Scyner, Michael Shepherd, Gordon Sloan, Dawn Williamson, Rev. Allen Tysick and Rev. David Stewart.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS OF 2006

The Drop-In Center on Pandora Avenue was vacated and relocated to 713 Johnson Street in property leased from The Cool Aid Society and AIDS Vancouver Island.

At this new location some changes were made in operations, in part as a result of a 'Good Neighbour Policy' worked out with the cooperation of the local business association, the City of Victoria and the Victoria Police Department. This has resulted in extending the opening hours from four per day to eight.

Subsequently, with encouragement and pressure from the Vancouver Island Health Authority, the Drop-In center began opening on weekends.

The Drop-In Center building was demolished and construction was begun on the new OPS building on that Pandora Avenue site. Completion of the new building is anticipated by November 2007. At that time the second old building, where the transitional housing and soup kitchen are continuing to operate, will be demolished.

The OPS Board undertook a Strategic Planning project with the goal of better defining our character and priorities. We involved staff, volunteers and members of the 'family' in this effort. We will be integrating this plan into operations throughout 2007.

Substantial Human Resource development work was done to define the organization that will be in place when the new building is in operation. The initial actions resulting from this – the appointment by the OPS Board of Allen Tysick as Executive Director and David Stewart as Director of Operations – have been taken. Continued definition and staffing of the organization is proceeding.

Facilitating the transition from two separate locations into the purpose-built new facility is a major and complex task. This will dominate priorities during 2007.

While final figures are not yet available, the combined financial results of OPS, the Open Door, and Upper Room for 2006 are favourable with revenues slightly greater than expenses. Fundraising returns for the three organizations combined were ahead of 2006.

We wish to commend several individuals and entities for their contribution to OPS during 2006. First, we are especially indebted to all members of staff, our host of wonderful volunteers, and members of our 'family' who have all contributed significantly in a year of great change and stress.

Second, we are very appreciative of the Open Door and Upper Room Boards who have continue to supervise most of the day-to-day operations which OPS has not yet been able to assume. Their support in a time of major adjustment and uncertainty has been invaluable.

Third, donors, both individuals and organizations, have blessed us again. This generosity, of both resources and spirit, is a cornerstone of our optimism for the future. Included in this is the support and encouragement of the Victoria Presbytery of the United Church of Canada.

Lastly, we pay tribute to the astonishing dedication and contributions of Allen Tysick and David Stewart. They are unusually talented and dedicated men who provide inspiration to all of us involved in this challenging project.

John Ronald
Chair
Our Place Society