

Green SAGE Vert A joint project of MCM and St. James United to raise awareness of bio-diversity in the urban setting and promote care of the environment

As part of our Green SAGE Vert vision/programming, MCM has played a hosting role in launching the local Green Faith Montreal Circle.

With the sun shining down upon us on the first day of autumn, members of our local Green Faith Montreal Circle took part in the September 23rd global climate strike, gathering and marching with thousands of others through the streets of Montreal in the call to climate justice. It was so inspiring to see people of all ages and backgrounds joining together in the desire to restore our communal relationship with all the earth. Our circle continues to expand as we make wonderful connections amongst individuals and organisations of various faith traditions across the city through both online gatherings and in-person events. If you are interested in finding out more about GreenFaith International and our local Montreal circle, please contact Montreal City Mission.

Rev. Wendy Evans, MCM Chair

For the past year, MCM has been participating with a group of New England non-profits in a Research Collaborative organised by the BTS Centre in Maine. Our goal: to explore how community organisations can embody an 'ecological imagination'. Last April we gathered for a retreat to deepen our connections with one another and the natural world. We benefit greatly in this project from workshops, inspirational leaders and in-depth conversations about environmental issues and how they relate to all of our programs and activities at MCM - educating ourselves and others on how to be better stewards of the planet earth.



MCM NEWS

CBC Charity of the Year

Montreal City Mission was selected for the 2022 CBC Charity of the Year. Alongside the Townshippers Foundation, MCM was recognised for the difference we make in communities by easing social integration through our various programs.



Apple Picking

Our annual outing drew more than 80 families (250 + individuals) this year from diverse backgrounds including Eritrea, Ukraine, Sudan, Iran, the Middle East, along with local Montrealers.



On the Move

Many Thanks to On the Move coordinator Youssef Kabaj for his leadership in this endeavour and for spreading the word in the legal milieu of the essential work accomplished at MCM.



Movable Feast

In July members of the St. James/MCM Community of Friends took a walking tour of the five sites where the St James congregation has met over its 220 year history in Montreal. At each site the group discussed the development of the Methodist church in North America, the history of Montreal, the role of downtown churches in mission and outreach to the neighbourhood that St James - MCM has always called home.



Peace Days

Moving stories ... delicious food ... new friends. This year we celebrated our annual Peace Day event by launching the Gathering at Table cookbook - a collection of recipes from near and far and the stories that inspire them. A shout out to Brian Bronfman and his team for taking us on this journey of peace!

Thanks to MCM's annual On the Move campaign, we began a weekly intergenerational sports club in the Montreal neighbourhood of NDG. What fun to gather with parents and kids for a friendly game of soccer while doing publicity for MCM!

Maheer Wakele

Montreal City
Mission
communautaire de Montréal

Transmission 2022

1435 rue City Councillors
Montréal, Québec H3A 2E4
www.montrealcitymission.org

montrealcitymission

(514) 844 9128

(514) 844 0067

*disponible en français

Gathering At Table

Community Comes Together

Our St. James/MCM Community of Friends gathered last April to celebrate Ramadan, Passover and Easter. Sharing traditional meals from these different faiths with 90 friends was truly a wonderful experience.

... I loved how we proudly shared our religious traditions. I was so impressed with how many members of the Muslim community came to our table to introduce themselves. They clearly felt "at home" and that makes my heart sing!!!

Val Shannon, Elder-in-Residence



Rev. Arlen Bonnar & Rabbi Boris Dolin at April gathering

GAT Cookbook

Local and newcomer seniors have been meeting for a year to get to know one another and share some of the food that nourishes their families and communities. At our cookbook launch in early October, those stories full of nostalgia and hope, and creating bonds across cultures, filled our gathering and our hearts with the many gifts of friendship and community. Visit montrealcitymission.org for delicious recipes and inspiring stories!



M.P. Sameer Zuberi & Kabaj family at April gathering

WWD Sewing Circle

Our Sewing Circle is innovating once again! After sewing masks for homeless shelters and senior residences in Quebec, New Brunswick and Ontario during the pandemic, the women are now supporting Help A Girl Out initiative in Brampton, On., sewing reusable menstrual supplies to help eliminate period poverty sustainably.

New Ideas Need Old Buildings

The role of an historic building like St. James United in the larger Montreal community was discussed at our annual Blue Met Literary Festival event last spring on a panel with Montreal entrepreneur Félix-Antoine Jolicoeur and Kindred Works CEO Tim Blair (Toronto), along with members from the MCM/St. James Community of Friends. Panel members and the public reflected on the untapped value and potential of St. James as a major actor in the 'secular' city.



Elder-in-Residence Robert Verrall & Dr. Amal Elsana at October gathering



Language Classes

English and French classes are up and running again with our volunteer teachers Andrew and Renaude.

To learn another language is to understand that we're not so different after all. It has been an honour sharing English-speaking culture and language each week. With their sharpened linguistic skills, I hope that our English Conversation group members find further enrichment in their professional and personal lives.

Andrew Cutforth

Holistic Reconciliation

This fall season we continue our important program with family therapist Waleed Alhmad and Dr. Amal Elsana, who are meeting with parents and their adolescents. Improving communication skills, dealing with culture shock and nipping conflict in the bud.

I start to implement what I hear during the sessions with my kids and I see great results!

With this group, I felt safe and assured that parenting is a challenge and life long experience.

My experience at the parent support group has been so useful and exceptionally encouraging.

Feedback from participants in Holistic Reconciliation



Camp Cosmos offers six weeks of exploration, learning and fun to children from diverse backgrounds, including First Nations, and job training/experience to teens and young adults

In 2022, Camp Cosmos celebrated its 50th anniversary with another summer full of fun, adventure and discovery!

We were thrilled to run the first full-capacity in-person camp after the pandemic at the beautiful Westmount Park United Church this year with some programming downtown at James United.

The Camp team prioritised outdoor play and explored the great city of Montreal with the campers while continuing to operate under precautions to ensure everyone's safety. The campers visited countless parks, pools, beaches, and enjoyed carefully planned programs. A new addition this year was a music program sponsored by St. James United.

In addition to our usual diverse group of campers - 93 in all - we launched a special project to welcome newly arriving Ukrainian children. Camp fees were waived entirely for 28 Ukrainian campers who were offered the opportunity to make new friends, adjust to life in Canada, and enjoy a worry-free summer without adding financial burdens for the families.

Camp Cosmos was featured in both the Montreal Gazette and Radio CJAD800, giving our Ukrainian campers and their parents a chance to share their stories.



I want to say a BIG THANK YOU to all members of the camp. Guys, you are AWESOME! You are positive, full of energy, everyone's smile makes our children (and parents as well) to feel safe and comfortable (it's vital for Ukrainians now, believe me). Another BIG THANK YOU is for activities you provided to our children... They are excited to travel, to have pool days and to spend time with their new friends. They receive lots of interesting information so as a result I see the children's good mental and physical development. WELL DONE GUYS!

A mother of two Ukrainian Campers, ages 5 & 9



*Dave Sidaway Montreal Gazette



*Dave Sidaway Montreal Gazette

A few long standing cases were resolved in 2022 following tireless efforts of the clinic team:

- A Pakistani women reunited with her children after 5 years (family reunification);
- A Nigerian woman and her child with special needs just returned to Canada after 10 years following a request to the United Nations;
- A Rwandan woman and her 3 children granted permanent residence after 14 years of separation; MCM became involved in 2017 (Humanitarian & Compassionate application).

My family is together once again thanks to Olga and her team! I will never be able to express how grateful I am to be reunited with my loved ones. A.



Advocacy

In addition to ongoing casework at the Just Solutions and Roger Snelling clinics, we have remained active in many collective advocacy campaigns in collaboration with other organisations. The *Comité accès garderies* scored a major victory after several years of hard work when the Quebec Superior Court ruled in May that the government may not exclude refugee claimants from publicly-funded daycare (the decision is currently being appealed). Other actions still in progress include a campaign led by *Médecins du monde* for public health care coverage for women with precarious immigration status, including for pregnancy, childbirth and sexual health. Finally, the *Collectif Loi 96: Des services publics de qualité pour tous.tes* has over the past year been engaged in a fight against new restrictions on immigrants' access to essential public services in languages other than French. We were not successful in obtaining amendments to the legislation, but will be pursuing its advocacy as the implementation directives are put into place over the upcoming months.

Peter Butler, Clinic staffer



Student Interns

We were delighted to welcome our new nursing and social work students to the MCM offices - for the first time in two years. And what a difference it makes to have that in person connection!

Sarah, Echo, Cam and Montana McGill Nursing
Ovi, Maria Eugenia, and Bianca McGill Social Work



I am grateful that I have the opportunity to do my first social work internship at the Just Solutions Legal Clinic. It is so enriching to navigate diverse layers of people's lived realities, their psychosocial needs, as well as their immigration process. I now understand the law through a new lens - one that is more humane and crucial to our practice as social workers.

Bianca Hutanu

