

## ELUCO ANNUAL REPORT 2014

30 years ago a group of visionaries from United Churches in East London met to address the needs of people living in poverty in the east end of the city. ELUCO was born! Poverty has not been eradicated, but over the years ELUCO, with partners from across the city, has been able to help families and individuals meet the challenges of day-to-day life. This would not be possible without the dedicated efforts of Nancy Howard, ELUCO's present community outreach worker. While much of her time is spent in assisting community members address crisis situations, she is always mindful of engaging in initiatives which will lead to long-term, sustainable solutions.

### **Christmas Share Program**

Late in September we were notified that the Marconi community was no longer eligible to be a part of St Paul's Daily Bread Christmas Share program. Over the past 20+ years 80 to 90 families/year in the Marconi area have accessed this service. A letter was sent out to supporters of ELUCO early in October outlining our needs. As November gave way to December, support poured in – toys, food, gift cards, cash, and sponsors for families - plus volunteers to help Nancy pull it all together. It truly was a Christmas miracle! 70 families composed of 386 children and 94 adults were assisted thanks to the generosity of so many.

### **Internship Program**

Early last year the Board agreed to an eight-month part-time internship placement for Cheryl Bolton (who will be seeking ordination in 2015). With financial assistance from United Church Council, Cheryl began her ministry placement with ELUCO in September. She has been a pastoral presence at Welcome Wednesdays and has had a coffee drop-in program with members of both Gethsemane Gardens and the Marconi community. Cheryl was also a great asset to Nancy with the new Christmas Share program. While Nancy is away in January 2015 she will be continuing regular programs two days a week. There has been a learning curve for both ELUCO and Cheryl. We are hopeful it will become an opportunity we can offer to other students so they can experience the challenges faced by vulnerable sectors of our society while providing ELUCO with new insights.

### **ELUCO Fundraising**

2014 saw ELUCO spearheading three different fundraising ventures. For six weeks volunteers met at Richards Memorial to mix, roll, bake and package **cinnamon buns** to sell in our various congregations. Nancy and members of her community as well as board members and friends of ELUCO produced 360 dozen buns for a profit of \$1764.00. A special thank you to Elma Johnston, for doing all the "prep work" as well as providing a lunch of soup and fresh bread for the volunteers. Thank you to Richards Memorial for the use of their kitchen.

In April our **1st annual Voices of Broadway Show Choir concert** was held at First- St. Andrew's United Church. This very talented group of musicians entertained an audience of 150 with song and dance routines - many familiar, and some not so familiar, Broadway hits. We have a 2<sup>nd</sup> concert planned for April 11, 2015 at First- St. Andrew's. Watch for details!

Our most successful **Walk and Roll for Families** was held in Springbank Park on the last Sunday in September. Many thanks to all those who walked and to those who pledged. You helped us swell the ELUCO coffers by \$7000.00

### **Welcome Wednesday Hospitality Lunch Program**

This program, held at the Salvation Army Citadel on Huron Street, continues to be well attended. A hot lunch for 80-100 is prepared and served by volunteers from Knollwood Baptist, Rowntree United, Siloam United, Valleyview Mennonite and ELUCO. This year a number of the regular attendees have taken over set-up/take down of tables and assisting with clean-up. What a great way to say thank you! The annual Christmas dinner of turkey and all the trimmings was enjoyed by about 125 on December 17<sup>th</sup>. Many thanks to all who keep this program running!

### **The ELUCO Food Cupboard**

In 2014 the Food Cupboard provided food to 687 families, which translates to 1087 adults and 586 children. A big thank you to our donors who provided cash or food to keep the shelves filled. Many thanks as well to our team of volunteers, who stock shelves, meet and greet the folks accessing this service, and fill the bags with much-needed groceries.

**ELUCO** is committed to working with, and advocating for, the most vulnerable in our society.

Success is not achieved quickly – as the last 30 years have shown, but with perseverance, dedication and **your support**, together we can continue to work towards a just society for all!

Carol Langford, Chair of ELUCO