

December 1, 2005

Ministry Update from Walter McIntyre

Kipling Avenue Baptist Church – Etobicoke, Ontario

Dover supports this ministry with a tithe of the Lewis and Marie Pruett Memorial Fund

Our Community

1. Last Friday evening our church began a drop-in basketball program at West Humber Collegiate Institute for the children and youth of the Jamestown community. We had a poor beginning. We had planned well. We had arranged for more than fifteen volunteer youth leaders from several local churches to be in attendance, including our own Andrew Evans. Our crime prevention officer, Robin Harvey, was lined up to attend. But in the end only a handful of youth came out.

At noon on Friday I received a phone call from a youth leader, Shahina Sayani. She was calling from the 7th Day Adventist Church, next to the West Humber high school. I could hardly make out her words - it sounded like people shouting in the background. She said, "Pastor Walter, I can't come to your office. I am sorry. Something terrible has happened and I am locked inside a church." As she spoke an ambulance screamed past my window, followed by a flood of speeding police cars. A young man, Amon Beckles, had been shot to death while attending the funeral of his best friend.

The roads were still tightly sealed off by the time we were ready to start our basketball program. I called the police and asked them if we should go ahead with our plans since the gymnasium we had rented at West Humber Collegiate Institute is adjacent to the church which was the scene of the crime. They replied, "Well, Robin can't come and help you the way we planned, but you should try to make a start. We will let your guys through the roadblocks and our officers will keep an eye on things from the outside. You should stick with your plans – don't let the bad guys win."

Police from four divisions surrounded the neighbourhood. The flashing lights of the cruisers lit up the whole neighbourhood. Hundreds of youth were able to look across the field and see that the lights of the gymnasium were on in the school, but only a handful of them were brave enough to leave their homes. Just a few came. And so that's how we started.

Pray that our ministry in Jamestown on Friday evenings will do some real good. Pray that twenty or thirty youth will come out this Friday. Pray that each one of them will be open to receive the love of Jesus as it is lived by the youth leaders and as it is explained to them during the devotional time following our play.

Also, in a second, but closely related matter, please pray that we, as the followers of Jesus, might offer good leadership in the face of this discouraging cycle of violence. On Monday November 28, a delegation of pastors from Etobicoke will be received at the Ontario Legislature to present the needs of our community as we see them. Pray that our requests would be carefully explained and wisely heard, and that God would add his blessing to all of our deliberations and efforts in order to bring about His will for our community.

Submitted By: Walter McIntyre