



SALEM Digest

Spring 2005 • Topics of interest to friends of Salem Christian Mental Health Association

WrapAround - A Way To Care

J. David Bish

Most pastors and congregations are not equipped with the skills or the resources to reach out effectively and make a difference in the lives of people with complex needs. The resulting feelings of impotence can eat away at a church's longing to be that compassionate presence reflecting the love of Christ in the community in which it is situated. *WrapAround* helps a congregation build bridges of mutual support between organizations and those families and individuals who need it.

Sally* read about *WrapAround* in the local newspaper. Having exhausted all other avenues of support she called the *WrapAround* office, currently located in the Staff Associates office at Stoney Creek United Church. The *WrapAround* co-ordinator did an immediate intake and arranged for a trained facilitator to meet with Sally. Sally, who is terminally ill, has custody of her grandson Carl, who is challenged with multiple issues. He is twelve years old with a functioning capacity of age six; he has diabetes, and is diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder. Sally's twenty year old daughter Meg (the child's aunt) is the primary caregiver. Meg has a grade eleven education, and

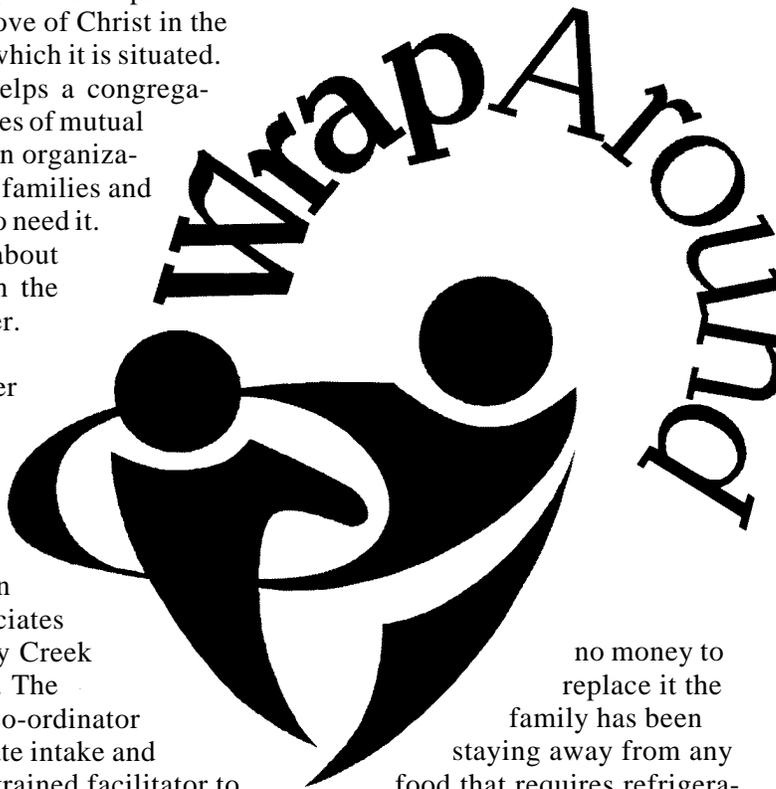
would love to finish high school.

Sarah, the facilitator, meets with the family and begins a process of outlining their strengths as a family unit. With only a disability pension to live on, money is scarce. The refrigerator died recently, and with

proper diet, emotional support, and ongoing medical needs along with the corresponding transportation requirements, top the list. Helping Carl enrol in a local Cub Pac group involves him with peer stimulation and adult supervision; it also allows Sally and Meg some time for themselves. A used fridge is donated by a local congregation, and another community group assists the family with transportation to medical appointments. A mentor is also arranged for Sally, who is finding that life can be a burden too heavy to carry on her own.

After several meetings and a whole lot of networking, progress is being made on the specific goals previously outlined in each of the life domain areas. These goals will be reassessed and new ones set as time goes on. Within eight to twelve months this family will be in better shape to deal more independently with the challenges that life has thrown them.

This family is representative of the many families or individuals with complex needs that place overwhelming demands on the pastoral care efforts of any congregation. Since our congregation in Stoney Creek has embraced *WrapAround* we no longer feel overwhelmed by the complexity of need that comes to our door for help. We no longer feel the frustration of limited resources that restrict a congregation's ability to provide unconditional and effective pastoral care.



no money to replace it the family has been staying away from any food that requires refrigeration. The role of a facilitator is to implement the *WrapAround* planning process with a family in need, and build a team that wraps services and supports around them.

After tapping into the family's strengths and support systems, Sarah leads the family through a discovery of the life domain areas that will need to be addressed. Finances, budgeting, education,

Director's Corner

Mark Vander Vennen

Like so many people, I was moved and heartened by the outpouring of generosity from around the world in response to the terrible tsunami that struck south Asia on December 26, 2004. Moved by the plight of thousands of grief-stricken and homeless people, people gave sacrificially of their time, money and talents. The help included sending trauma counselors to support people through their indescribable losses.

The devastation, and the world's response, make me think about the heartbreaking "mini"-tsunamis that occur, often invisibly, in our own communities. As the cover story of this *Digest* suggests, *WrapAround* is one way in which churches can respond to the often indescribable trauma of mental illness. *WrapAround* is a highly refined methodology for helping churches and faith communities build community circles of care around people with mental health issues and diagnoses.

WrapAround is just one of many opportunities that the Salem Board is currently exploring as potential directions for Salem's ministry. By the time you read this, Salem's Board of Directors, Trustees and Staff will have had a retreat which will attempt to tie together a number of visioning exercises undertaken this year. Please pray that an exciting, dynamic vision for Salem's work will emerge to enhance the

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“
... the
words of
our Lord
ring loud
and
clear: “I
was hun-
gry and
you
gave me
food . . .

”

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WrapAround - A Way to Care

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How Will WrapAround Help Your Church?

WrapAround allows the community to view a congregation as a caring and compassionate presence acting on the basis of unconditional love. The *WrapAround* process can act as a catalyst to enhance a congregation's integrity in ministry by extending an effective healing ministry into the broader community that often views the church as insular and irrelevant to people's day-to-day needs. *WrapAround* is a compelling model for Christ-like service that attracts willing volunteers of all ages. Using a highly effective structure and process it equips these volunteers with skills and supports, giving them the confidence they need to minister to families dealing with serious issues. By building partnerships with multiple community resource providers, a congregation is able to tailor its pastoral care ministry to people whose complexity of need could otherwise overwhelm a church's personnel and material resources. *WrapAround*, therefore, allows a congregation to expand its resource base for ministry without overtaxing its membership.

Eugene Peterson's paraphrase of our Lord's mission statement in Luke 4:18 & 19 has Jesus saying, "God's Spirit is on me; he has chosen me to preach the message of good news to the poor, sent me to announce

pardon to prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to set the burdened and battered free, to announce, 'This is God's year to act!'" For congregations to live out this vision for ministry is to be truly Christ-like. God asks of us nothing less. *WrapAround* encourages the kind of "frontline volunteering" (or as I would rather refer to it—servanthood) among our members and within the community at large, which enables this vision to be lived out in real terms.

How Does A Congregation Begin?

Any congregation can get started by linking up with a local *WrapAround*. If none exist, it could choose to host a *WrapAround* Initiative information evening in its community. This session would outline the *WrapAround* process and assess the need for an Initiative in the area. If a need is discerned and the congregation is willing to pursue an Initiative, the church's leadership could sponsor facilitator information and training sessions. A community steering team would need to be established to guide the *WrapAround* Initiative. The church might offer its building on an ongoing basis for meetings and training sessions, and even assign some of its ministry staff-time to develop and support this work. Financial support for the Initiative is always helpful but not obligatory.

Developing a flexible resource team provides opportunities of service for volunteers for whom the facilitator role is not their bag.

WrapAround is a compelling model for Christ-like service that attracts willing volunteers of all ages.

Carpenters, plumbers, those who can help with transportation and child care, or those able to set up a clothing share, can all help to determine the success of a *WrapAround*. Fund raising is always a challenge, but also the source of good fellowship and personal satisfaction, knowing that one is helping to sustain the project.

At the end of the day the words of our Lord ring loud and clear: "I was hungry and you gave me food, or helped me find employment; I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, sustained me when my soul was parched; I was a stranger and you welcomed me, took me in when the system left me to fend for myself; I was naked and you clothed me, helped me to rediscover my dignity; I was sick and in prison and you gave me the support and guidance I needed to get back

on my feet (Matthew 25:35 & 36)."

WrapAround is one of a number of directions currently being considered by Salem's Board for potentially supporting your congregation's pastoral care and outreach ministries. It was my pleasure to speak about *WrapAround* to Salem's board and staff this past fall.

If you see a fit between *WrapAround* and your congregation, why not contact Salem's Executive Director, Mark Vander Vennen (markvv@salem.on.ca), to let Salem know. May God bless you as you consider this incredible venture in Christian service.

For further information on *WrapAround* go to: <http://www.vroonvdb.com/calliope.html> ; or <http://www.paperboat.com/info.html>.

* Names and other identifying characteristics have been changed.

Rev. Bish has been a minister at Stoney Creek United Church since

1998. He has served congregations in both Canada and the United States. Raised in Toronto, David attended Ryerson University (Bus. Administration- Marketing).

He holds an M.Div from Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, and a M.Th from Emmanuel College, U. of Toronto. David is married to Mary who is the minister at Grace United Church in Caledonia. Together they have three children and three grandchildren. Rev. Bish is a member of the steering team for the Hamilton Wrap-Around Initiative, and the Stoney Creek Wrap-Around.

The Board of Salem



Christian Mental Health Association

would like to invite all members, friends, and supporters of Salem to join us for the Annual General Meeting to be held:

Wednesday, June 15, 2005
Commencing at 7:00 p.m.

Redeemer University College
(Executive Dining room)
777 Garner Road East, Ancaster, ON

Discussion and Approval of New Bylaws
Approval of Acts by the Board of Salem
from June 2004 to June 2005

Refreshments will be served.

IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING

burnout, loss of faith,
sudden depression, or
any other debilitating crisis...

IF YOU ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF

couple unhappiness,
family conflict,
parenting dilemmas,
or other relationship difficulties...

IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH

addictions,
emotional, physical, or sexual abuse,
or any deeply rooted psychic pain...

SALEM CAN HELP

www.salem.on.ca

Counsellors:

Hamilton

Judy Cook, M.Ed.

Betty Brouwer, M.Sc.

Mark Vander Vennen, M.Ed., R.S.W.

Bowmanville

June Zwier, M.Div

For further information or appointment phone:

Hamilton: 905-528-0353

Bowmanville: 905-623-9901

WHERE THE HEART IS . . .

Judy Cook

Then and . . .

Like a home, an organization tends to function best when there is someone in it who occupies its centre, who is the hub which helps the rest of the organization move along smoothly towards its objectives and goals.

Nienke Van Dyke is the kind of person who very ably occupied that centre spot for the last 21 years of Salem's existence. Nienke helped to connect clients to their counselors and vice versa, board members to Salem's Executive Director, and supporting community to the organization as a whole. Nienke signed our payroll cheques, paid Salem's bills, sent thank-you notes to donors, and problem-solved with clients how their counselling could best be paid for. She ordered office supplies, bought the coffee & tea consumed at Salem, and cleaned up after board and other meetings, resisting our suggestion she post a sign which would read: "Please do your own dishes— your mother doesn't work here!"

Through it all, Nienke was always cheerful and helpful, always respectful of clients' as well as staff needs and boundaries. Nienke is a good listener, a good encourager, and in many ways became a sounding board to the rest of us at Salem when we were stressed or unsure about how to proceed in a difficult or challenging situation.

Before you begin to think that

what I am writing is a eulogy, let me reassure you that Nienke is very much alive and well! She has, however, decided that she is ready to enter the next stage of life commonly referred to as retirement. After a frantic last few weeks which included ensuring a smooth transition to the new persons hired to take her place, Nienke began her retirement with a well-deserved trip to visit family in beautiful Victoria, B.C. But before Nienke could leave, Salem has had to hire two people to take her place—Elaine Prinzen to take care of financial matters, and Danielle VandenAkker who will become that new hub, that new heart of Salem to help the rest of us connect to each other and to the people we serve.

Although Elaine and Danielle will no doubt enhance the work of Salem in their own right, there will never be another Nienke. It is truly with sadness that the rest of us at Salem say goodbye to her. We hope that she will drop in for coffee on occasion (we'll be glad to wash her cup) and that she will continue to come to our annual meetings and any other Salem events.

We will miss seeing you, Nienke, in the spot you have occupied so long and so well here at Salem. Undoubtedly you will always continue to occupy a significant spot in our own hearts. May God bless you in your new occupations and pursuits for the future.

. . . Now

Director's Corner

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strong work that Salem is already doing!

New Staff

Of course, moving ahead requires a strong supporting structure. Several internal changes have either taken place or soon will. This fall we welcomed Elaine Prinzen as our new bookkeeper, and this spring we welcomed Danielle VandenAkker as our new Office Administrator. They replace Nienke Van Dyke, who very capably served as Salem's Office Administrator for 21 years, and who now begins a well-deserved retirement. It is also my pleasure to report that the Board has seen fit to have me carry on as Salem's Interim Executive Director for a second year, in order to help see the visioning process through.

New Bylaws

Finally, likely in June, a joint resolution by the Directors and the Trustees will ask the membership to approve a new set of bylaws for the organization. Our current bylaws date from the mid-1960s and are badly in need of revision. The Board and Trustees are convinced that the proposed new bylaws will position Salem for the growth in service that we pray God has in store for us and the clients whom we serve.

Through it all, we covet your prayers and your financial support, and we are grateful for all of the actions that you undertake to support the vulnerable in your communities!

Mark