



July 2021

“It seems to me we have a lot of story yet to tell.” - Walt Disney

2021 marks Fontbonne Ministries' twenty-first year of service as the Sisters of St. Joseph Toronto's latest expression of love for God and neighbour.

Over this time, Fontbonne Ministries has built on the Congregation's rich tradition of service in hospitals, schools, and social services and brought together **unique responses to current and emerging community needs.**

Fontbonne Ministries programs supported those facing challenges accessing safe and affordable housing and food – as well as people experiencing social isolation and loneliness.

Through offerings as diverse as rent-geared-to-income housing for older single women to pottery classes, drop-ins, movie nights and accessible yoga and tai chi classes, Fontbonne Ministries created more than just places where things happen.

It created safe, inclusive, welcoming, and connected communities.

With the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, the way Fontbonne Ministries served our communities changed as we continued to adapt and refine our support to meet needs as they emerged.



We also began to look more in depth at what we do, who we serve, how Fontbonne Ministries is seen in the community, and how to honour the Sisters who guided our first two decades.

Last December, we began to look at updating our **Mission and Values Statements** to reflect the next steps in our organization's development.

Led by Fontbonne Ministries' Mission Integration team – Leanne Kloppenborg and Sister Kristine Fernandes – the first step was to bring together a Working Group to steer the process.

With the tagline **“Our Joyful Purpose”** in mind and composed of Fontbonne Ministries staff, Board members, and volunteers, the Working Group met every three weeks beginning in January 2021. Their first task? Developing a survey for our staff, Sisters, and CSJ staff and Associates, as well as Fontbonne Ministries' program participants, donors and community partners.

The survey was to capture the opinions of the widest group possible. It was given online, over the phone, and even via a “dotmocracy” for Mustard Seed guests set up and facilitated by Sister Kristine.

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Leanne Kloppenborg and Sister Kristine Fernandes (l-r).

Our Mission

In the end, 111 stakeholders responded to the survey, and their responses were surprisingly consistent. What shone through was the high regard our stakeholders have for Fontbonne Ministries and our high standards of inclusion and care.

After several drafts, the proposed final version of the Mission Statement was presented to the Fontbonne Ministries Board of Directors on June 3 – and approved unanimously without revision.

The new Mission Statement was revealed to Fontbonne Ministries staff during our Founding Day celebrations on June 16, 2021, and we are pleased to share it with you here. With these three sentences and 67 words, our Mission Statement is both a toast to our past and a salute to the future we share with all those touched by the work we do.



We are a welcoming community

where you are not alone, and everyone belongs.



As an inclusive social service organization,

our programs foster personal well-being and creativity and respond to food and housing insecurity, social isolation and loneliness.



Wherever you are in your life,

the spirit of our founders – the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto – inspires us to join with you in nourishing mind, body and heart.

Doing the ordinary...

with

Our Values

In addition to the Mission Statement, the Working Group also reviewed Fontbonne Ministries' Values Statements which had not been changed or reviewed in more than a decade.

Rather than change these core values – which were revealed by our surveys to be very important to all of our stakeholder groups – the Group looked instead to clarifying the language we use to ensure that what Fontbonne Ministries stands for is clear to everyone.



Respect

We value each person as a distinct expression of God's love and invite each other to discover and celebrate our unique gifts.



Advocacy

We respond to society's evolving needs and mobilize positive change through transformational leadership.



Community

We work together with neighbours and partners to build strong relationships that are mutually supportive and collaborative.



Accountability

We use the resources entrusted to us with care, and make sustainable choices that will benefit future generations.



Compassion

We give our full attention to each person and show understanding, empathy and sensitivity to their needs.

Our Vision

Our Vision Statement – **building welcoming and supportive communities and pursuing social change** – remains unchanged.

We are grateful to all those who participated in the creation of our new Mission and Values and who shared their perspective, experiences and opinions with us.

extraordinary care.

What's Next?



Looking forward to welcoming you back.

This coming fall, we'll be initiating our Strategic Planning process, setting our future direction beginning in 2022.

As with our Mission and Values Statements, there will be opportunities for consultation with, and input from, our stakeholder groups.

Providing support post-pandemic will likely be as challenging in its own way as it has been to provide it during the pandemic, and we will need the wisdom of our partners and friends to ensure we continue to do this successfully.

By the fall, we also hope that many – if not most – of our programs and supports will have welcomed back participants to our indoor spaces.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

- Jeremiah 29:11

While there will likely be restrictions on capacity for the foreseeable future, we are waiting not-so-patiently to welcome you back in person.

It's been more than a year – fifteen months, in fact – and we've missed you.

It seems that we've cautiously turned a corner on the pandemic, and look forward to being able to get back to work on our usual scale.

In the meantime – enjoy your summer, stay safe, and we'll see you in September.

All the best,

Ben Vozzolo
Executive Director



Fontbonne Ministries
SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH, TORONTO

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Charitable Registration No.
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Fontbonne Ministries, Sisters of St. Joseph, Toronto, offers diverse programs that are welcoming and inclusive. The charity was founded in 2000 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto, a community of women who, through their compassionate presence, respond to various needs. Fontbonne Ministries continues, with the Sisters, their mission of reflecting the love of God and neighbour.

The ministries are funded by the Sisters of St. Joseph and individual donations. Thank you for your support!