

General Manager's Report



Pete Wierenga

The excitement and progress at Niagara Christian Gleaners (NCG) continues as we build confidence in what we are doing. Often my work includes introducing individuals, corporations and organizations to who we are and what our goals are. Whenever possible, I encourage a morning visit and tour for people to gain the best possible experience. The comments I hear following these visits affirms to me that we have something uniquely special going on at NCG that is already touching lives - even though the food distribution has not formally begun.



The addition of our part-time Assistant Manager position will allow me to have a more concentrated focus on building

our food donor relations that are crucial to managing our food supply in the best way possible. Strengthening our network of producers, packing plants, and transport companies will help balance our need for steady, good quality food donations. Important to NCG is also the need to have the proper range of produce types - particularly vegetables.

Interacting with our volunteers is always a joy and they warm my heart. Many of our volunteers are regulars who generously give of their time to NCG. The atmosphere is upbeat and we laugh often. Because we are so new, we continue to fine tune our production methods to make the most effective, efficient use of our plant and equipment. Our expanded management team is now allowing us to make ways to schedule groups to serve at NCG outside of



normal production hours. The flexibility of these added evening and Saturday time slots will help us meet our goal of being an inclusive mission, covering all generations and age groups. We see the importance of our younger generation learning about the injustice of food waste, solutions to curb this waste, the value of community, and the call on our lives to be conduits of mercy in a hurting, hungry world.



God is at work. We're humbled by the blessings we are experiencing as we take next steps in developing this mission. We will always direct all glory to our Heavenly Father who has seen fit to include Niagara Christian Gleaners as part of His divine, redemptive plan.

Volunteer Profile



John Wybenga is one of our most senior volunteers at 92. He lives in Evergreen Terrace in Grimsby. He got involved in "Gleaning" with the Ontario Christian Gleaners in Cambridge. He would travel the one hour there and back very faithfully every week, sometimes together with another couple from Grimsby.

In the fall of 2018, John switched his allegiance to the Niagara Christian Gleaners. He now regularly comes twice a week and helps in the cutting room.

John and his late wife, Helen, spent 6 years in the Dominican Republic working for the Christian Reformed World Mission. Helen worked to organize the library and cataloged all the thousands of seminary study books which had been given to the Mission. John travelled and helped build churches while working with the displaced Haitians living there.

John loves his work at the Gleaners! It allows him to do what 2 Corinthians 9:10 tells us to do: "He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness."



Fundraising Report

Reflecting on the year past, we are truly amazed! One year ago, we did not even have the shovel in the ground, or the funds to put up a building. Now, we're blessed to be in full operation and all the funds have come in for the Capital Drive. Our task as committee has changed and we are now mandated to raise the funds for the daily operation of Niagara Christian Gleaners. We are so thankful that the LORD has worked in the hearts of so many to give generously to this cause.

There are a number of events we have planned for 2019. Planning is underway and excitement is building for our "GRATITUDE" dinners to be held, DV, on April 12 and 13. Our



response to last year's dinner was so great that we have added a second night. We hope to see many of you there! Also, be sure to attend the Strawberry Social in June. Both events are held with the intention of creating awareness of what NCG is, as well as to raise funds. Please also consider giving through monthly, pre-authorized payments; this would be a fantastic way to help ensure the Gleaners' monthly expenses are met.

As Committee, we also appreciate the work that our church reps do to keep you informed. If your church does not have a representative, we would love to have you come on board. Feel free to contact us about this or to ask questions. As we continue our work as Fundraising Committee, we look forward to your generous response, whether it means volunteering at the site and/or monthly donations. We are thankful each day that this work can continue.



Board Report

What was once a vision, has now become reality. It was just over 3 years ago that a few people got together to discuss what the Lord was laying on their hearts. What could they do to respond to the needs of the hungry, and share of their abundance? Was a Niagara version of the Ontario Christian Gleaners in Cambridge an effective way of providing needed food?

More like minded individuals were contacted and soon the NCG was formed. Other Gleaners were visited, and plans were started. The vision was shared, funds were raised, and in 2017 land was purchased.

Our capital fundraiser of \$2.2 million began, and in May the building rose from the ground. In September the building was completed within budget, and we celebrated with an Open House. Mid November saw trial runs of produce and by early December we were in regular production. As our volunteers become pros and routines were developed, more servings



were being made for those in need. In February, the board hired Rick Batenburg as a part time assistant to our general manager, Pete Wierenga. As a board, we are thankful for their work and organization that makes a team effort of everyone's input, in the service of our God.

The desire to serve the Lord and their fellow man is also evident in the volunteers who show up daily to do the work of turning wet produce into dried veggie/fruit mix. Of our several hundred volunteers, an average of 40 show up daily for a morning of fulfilling work and fellowship.

This is also a prayerful ministry. As we proceed to the next step of distribution, we pray for the effectiveness of this food, as well as for the spiritual nourishment of the Christian gospel that will accompany it.

