



FALL 2022

# NEWSLETTER



**Niagara Christian Gleaners (NCG) has put another amazing summer behind us. We certainly experienced a number of notable changes as the seasons changed.**

Most obvious to us at the moment is that our younger volunteers have returned to school. One of the amazing strengths of our ministry is the ability to include and involve a rather large range of volunteer ages and abilities. When compared to other service opportunities, this seems to be a rather unique attribute that NCG is blessed to be able to offer. We're thankful for all our volunteers and we couldn't do this important work without the rather large number of volunteers. The fall and winter season ahead of us actually creates opportunities for others to get involved who may not be able to help during the summer months. If this is you, please consider trying a morning of volunteering at the Gleaners - you will certainly be blessed!

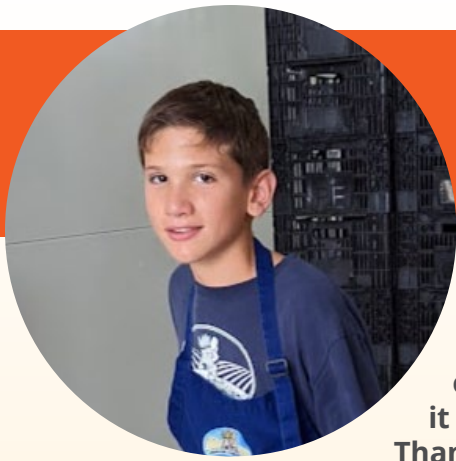
It's harvest season for many of our grower partners. Ontario is a rich growing region and we benefit from intercepting even just a small fraction of the local food that is available. As we head into year five of production later this

## PETE'S PEN

year, it's hard to comprehend how far we have come as an organization. I remember early days when I would "cold call" on some producers to introduce them to the Gleaners. The responses were always varied and, thankfully, many producers trusted that we would keep to our word about what would be done with their extra produce. Now, nearly 5 years in, we have a wonderful relationship with many food donors who readily work with us and generously route their surplus produce to the Gleaners. Without a doubt, our growers' first passion is to grow food. Many of them are very good at it. The idea that food may be wasted by circumstances beyond their control is something that cuts to the core of their passion for growing food. NCG simply takes their gift and transforms it into something that will bless a hungry person on the other side of the globe - all in Christ's name.

We're thrilled to have our reefer trailer project completed. The stunning graphics are a beautiful witness to what NCG is all about. If

*(continued inside bottom left)*



# CHEERFUL CHOPPERS

## VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Last newsletter we featured the work of a senior volunteer at NCG, and now, the article below, highlights one of the many student volunteers we have. On average this past summer there were 15 students a day helping out and we are very grateful for the help of these fine young people! At NCG it is truly a multi-generational group of dedicated workers and volunteers. Thanks to Andy Bok for this heartfelt letter of what he does at NCG and why!

Hi, my name is Andy Bok, I am 14 years old, and I really enjoy volunteering at NCG. I first heard about the Niagara Christian Gleaners during the first wave of Covid in 2020. I was in grade six and my sister, Amber, and I, were getting bored around the house, so my mom took us to NCG. It was my mom's first time too. Despite Covid, there were still lots of volunteers hard at work. We signed up and when we arrived, we got right to work. Everyone wanted to know our names, where we lived, and lots of other things about us. You can also meet and learn lots of interesting things about other people too. That's one of the blessings that comes with volunteering at NCG, you can make so many friends while you work to help others. I was signed up for the warehouse and was filling trays, but the people working on the dicer needed a hand stacking vegetable-filled crates. That led to dicing the vegetables and washing the crates as well. It has been my job ever since. At around 10:00 we go for break. Pete always tells us where shipments are going to and what we are going

to do the next day. That is always helpful because it reminds me of why I am doing this. Then, after he is done, he always says, "Uhh. I have a joke." Everyday he has a new joke; sometimes it's funny...sometimes. We end with a devotion, and then get back to work. 11:30 is when we usually stop, clean up, and go home for lunch. Every morning just flies by and soon we are all done. Working at NCG is very fulfilling. When you work there, you are helping thousands to get food. Thousands of hungry people will eat because of our work. It doesn't matter if you're doing a minor task or a large one, we are all helping those in need. We never have too many volunteers, so if you can, you should come. Matthew 22: 37-39 says, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment and a second is like it, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

**We at NCG are using our talents to love those in need, love one another, and glorifying God through it all.**



you're stuck behind our truck on one of Ontario's congested highways it'll be hard not to notice that we are unashamedly a Christian mission seeking to extend mercy in a hurting, hungry world. Special thanks to those who helped make this project a reality including John Zwaagstra and his team at Zwaagstra trucking who have been generously hooking on to this trailer and fetching

much of our produce donations. From all of us at NCG we wish you a wonderful Thanksgiving. May all of us take sincere stock of the incredible blessings that the Lord continues to pour out on us - especially during this harvest season. PW





# BOUNTIFUL BLESSINGS

## FOOD RECIPIENT - BARNABAS AID - UKRAINE

**In partnership with Barnabas Aid, Niagara Christian Gleaners has been instrumental in feeding many thousands of needy people throughout Ukraine.**

When the conflict in Ukraine started, we quickly realized that we could not provide aid in the usual way, such as sending funds to purchase food either in-country or from a neighbouring country. Food quickly became scarce and very expensive. We had to find ways to send food and aid from North America to Europe to then be distributed in Ukraine. Niagara Christian Gleaners were quick to respond to our appeal for help, and we praise God that we have now shipped three 40-foot containers to Romania, all filled with food generously donated and loaded quickly and efficiently by NCG.

Using a robust logistics network and key trusted partners, we have managed to get food from Canada, across the Atlantic, docking at Rotterdam in the Netherlands, and then from there by road across to Northern Romania. In Romania, the containers have been off-loaded by volunteers into a secure warehouse where the boxes of food have been loaded into vans and taken over the border at Siret. Once in the Ukraine, the food

has been driven to a secure location and then further given to other volunteer partners where it is taken right across Ukraine to various locations.

The NCG dried potatoes have been distributed in both rural and urban areas. Because of the breakdown in infrastructure in Ukraine, very often the people in the rural areas are starving and are so very grateful to receive this much needed food. The food has even made its way into the war zone where it has fed many hungry and vulnerable women, children, and elderly people (the men have all been conscripted to fight).

Very often, our partners arrive at a village and start distributing the food and a queue of thousands of people will quickly form. People are scared, hungry and clearly desperate. This food has literally saved the lives of hundreds of Ukrainian refugees who have, in many cases, lost everything. We are so grateful and blessed by Niagara Christian Gleaners and give God the glory for all that has been achieved. Together, we have managed to make a real difference to the lives of many people.

Written by: **Jeremy Frith**  
**Chief Executive Officer of Barnabas Aid**



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

*We need your help!*

Most of our young volunteers are back in school and the food keeps coming! Sign up as a volunteer on our web site!

**The working of many helping hands and minds under the Lord's guidance always produces a blessing. We experience this every day at the Niagara Christian Gleaners!**

The abundant supply of high quality vegetables and fruits, the willing volunteers, our distribution partners in the areas of need, these are all working for the benefit of others in service to the Lord. At the present time, our production is up 40% over last year, with 8.7 million servings having gone out the door so far this year.

Our next 3 shipments will be to Kenya through Word and Deed, to Haiti through Warehouse of Hope, and to Namibia through Barnabas Aid. Kenya and Namibia have experienced severe drought for several years causing loss of livestock and crops. Our increase in production this past year gives us the ability to add these people to the list of those we can share with this year.

We would like to thank one of our assistant managers, Rick Beyer, for his contributions to the NCG. He is leaving his position due to other commitments that require more of his time. In filling this vacant position, the board saw fit to add the position of operations

## BOARD REPORT

manager to the team, and hired Ryan Veldhuizen to fill this role. Ryan has many years of experience with shipping and logistics in the greenhouse industry, and sees his role at NCG as an active way to become even more involved in Christian Kingdom work. We welcome him to the NCG family. He joins our assistant managers, Rick Batenburg and Warren Hoeksema, all under our general manager, Pete Wierenga, in continuing to direct our day to day operations effectively.



*Ryan Veldhuizen*

Thanks to all for the generous support which allows us to provide this important work of mercy in sharing from our abundance to those in need. Please read about our expansion plans to make us be even more effective, and help us out as you are able! We covet your prayers for the work being done here, and especially that the ones being fed may see the hand of God in the nutrition that they receive.

## YOUR DONATION MAKES AN IMPACT!

As a non-profit organization, we rely on donations from people just like you.

### 3 WAYS TO GIVE:

#### DONATE ONLINE

[niagaragleaners.org/donate](http://niagaragleaners.org/donate)

#### E-TRANSFER

[givingnccg@gmail.com](mailto:givingnccg@gmail.com)

#### CHEQUE BY MAIL

TO: Niagara Christian Gleaners