

Salvation Army opens its doors at Northridge Community Church



By Jake Courtepatte

The brick and mortar are set, the paint is dried, and the doors are open at the Salvation Army's opening of the new Northridge Community Church location.

Local dignitaries and members of the Aurora congregation gathered outside the building Saturday to officially dedicate the modern facility.

"This has actually been a thirteen-year journey," said Bishop. "It really started in 2003 when the team at the Newmarket location had a vision to continue to want to grow the ministry of the Salvation Army, where we weren't just focusing on ourselves but focusing more on the needs of the community."

The Salvation Army purchased the property, located on Leslie Street just north of Wellington Street, in 2006. The deal landed the organization five acres to work with, moving from their long-term location behind Newmarket High School.

Aurora Mayor Geoff Dawe welcomed the Salvation Army's return to Aurora, having had a personal experience with the organization in the past.

"I have had a number of opportunities to witness the services provided by the Salvation Army, from my father recounting his positive experiences when he was in the navy in WWII stationed out of Halifax, to my own summer job at the camp up at Jackson's Point, to more recent experiences like the Christmas dinners!"

Deputy Mayor John Abel said the facility brings another level of interconnectivity to the residents of Aurora and the surrounding area.

"As community partners, the town and local businesses are able to work with the Salvation Army on so many initiatives. We are glad they decided to call Aurora home."

Newmarket-Aurora MP Kyle Peterson brought well wishes from the federal government, stating the strong relationship between its members and the Salvation Army.

"The Northridge Community Church supports over 1,000 families during the Christmas season, provides care and support for single mothers, and financial assistance for those with low income. The Salvation Army's deep-rooted commitment to communities at a local level is so much appreciated."

York Regional Police Chief Eric Joliffe said the YRP has been a "proud partner" of the Northridge location for many years, in particular when their various holiday programs merged under one umbrella as "Holiday Heroes" in 2008. The Salvation Army has since helped the force in distributing toys, food, and clothing to families within Aurora, Newmarket, East Gwillimbury, and King. Find out more about the new facility at www.northridgesa.com.