

# **The Dreamers Peace Garden, and the Toronto Christian Resource Centre**

## **The Dreamers**

A gun. A man. A great loss.... Many guns. Many men. Greater loss.

When violence has taken life in Regent Park, there has been nothing to mitigate the grief. The Dreamers have begun to change this.

The Dreamers are a group of mothers whose sons have been killed. Their vision is not only to address their grief, but also to get at the underlying causes and conditions that have led to the death of their children. They also work to educate youth and explore options to stop violence through visitation and speaking engagements to youth in the local detention centre and neighbourhoods.

The Toronto Christian Resource Centre (TCRC) has worked with the Dreamers to create a sacred garden in the heart of Regent Park, to act as a memorial for all lives lost through violence and accidents. It is an expression of love, hope, faith, and goodwill for all.

## **The Toronto Christian Resource Centre**

The Christian Resource Centre is situated in Regent Park in the downtown core of the city of Toronto. The centre provides support and guidance to individuals in need while endeavouring to meet them with all the dignity they deserve. At the same time, they work to honour and strengthen the sometimes fragile social fabric of the neighbourhood.

TCRC is a ministry of the United Church that provides practical assistance to people marginalized by poverty, and advocates for justice for people living on the edge of society. While preserving their connection with the church, the resource centre has been a community agency involved in the areas of housing, food access and security, community initiatives, and advocacy.

TCRC has been housed for many years in Regent Park United Church at 40 Oak Street in the middle of Regent Park, Canada's oldest and largest public housing development. The land and building is owned by the Toronto United Church Council, which has maintained a cooperative and supportive relationship with the centre for many years.

Over the next 12–15 years, all of the housing in Regent Park will be torn down and replaced by a new community that will include a mix of housing types including social housing, market rental, and ownership housing.

The Christian Resource Centre sees the redevelopment of Regent Park as an opportunity to rebuild and reaffirm the presence of the United Church in this community. The Board of Directors formed a Development Committee with representation from TCRC, the Regent Park

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United Church congregation, Toronto South Presbytery, Regent Park residents, the Toronto United Church Council, and the Toronto Urban Native Ministry.

They are committed to investing in this evolving community and major urban redevelopment project in the following ways:

- staying in Regent Park
- adding to the housing stock and the range of housing forms
- creating a worship space to serve a variety of faith groups
- continuing to create programs that are responsive and relevant to the needs of the community
- incubating and supporting a Community Hub to foster the growth of small community groups—thus, in turn, enhancing the goals of social inclusion and social cohesion in the emerging community

The Development Committee has been working, planning, and negotiating with Toronto Community Housing Corporation and the city to develop this exciting proposal.

For more information, please contact Andrew Allan (416) 363-4234 x 236 or [andrewa@tcrc.ca](mailto:andrewa@tcrc.ca).

Read more about the Redevelopment Project and the Toronto Christian Resource Centre at [www.tcrc.ca](http://www.tcrc.ca).