

BLOG.

Farewell dinner for Rev. Bell

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A "dynamic, concerned and devoted" minister is leaving his congregation this week to take a new position in Bell's Corners, a suburb of Ottawa.

Rev. Donald Bell has been minister of Bethesda United Church for almost seven years. During his term as minister, he saw the building move from its former site of 110 years at Dundas St. and Wharton way to a new location in the Forest Glen area.

The move was made about six years ago, and since that time, under Rev. Bell's capable hands, the church has reached out into the community to actively participate in social situations.

Rev. Bell was instrumental in spearheading the campaign to set up Distress Line in Mississauga. Along with councillor Ron Searle, Rev. Bell consulted the police department to determine the need for a telephone service through which depressed people could find solace.

Since the instigation of Distress Line, police statistics on people contemplating or carrying out adverse actions have dropped.

Distress Line is run from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m. seven days a week by trained volunteers. According to Derick Morrison, a member of the Bethesda

Congregation and a personal friend of Rev. Bell, the project has been Rev. Bell's greatest achievement and major contribution to the City of Mississauga.

"It was a tough battle to set up Distress Line because a fair amount of money had to be raised but the service has proven successful, and maybe once we get enough volunteers the lines can be open 24 hours a day," said Mr. Morrison.

"Rev. Bell has been into so many things in the community that it's just incredible," said Mr. Morrison.

He is active in many of the community aspects of the Rotary Club, and he was instrumental in recently starting Mecca (Mississauga East Community Churches in Action), an ecumenical organization which plans to take action on social issues in the community.

Recently, the Bethesda congregation held a farewell dinner for Rev. Bell with several community leaders attending to pay tribute to the man.

"I've never seen such a dynamic man in my life," said Mr. Morrison. "He puts in 18 - 20 hours of work each day from youth work to senior citizens activities and he's always wondering what he can do next to help the community."