



Tent City Update - Court Case

March 14, 2016 (from CHEK TV)

On day two of an injunction hearing in B.C. Supreme Court, it was the defense's turn to argue why homeless people should be able to continue camping on the courthouse lawn.

On Monday, some of the campers and supporters entered the Victoria Law Courts to present their argument for remaining on the provincially-owned land. "We want land, and homes, we don't just want quick fixes, we want to make sure our stories are heard," said tent city camper Kyle Wright.

On Friday the province outlined its argument at the injunction hearing, saying the camp is a health and safety hazard and a public nuisance. But on Monday lawyers for the residents argued it is safer for the city's homeless in the tent city community than alone on the streets. One of the most heated moments in court came when the defense refuted the province's claims that human feces had been found on the property and around it. The defense lawyer said those claims were wholly unsubstantiated & only aimed to perpetuate prejudice against the homeless. She said the province should be chastised for even bringing it up — the courtroom erupted in applause.

The defense also told the Supreme Court Chief Justice that residents have been meeting weekly with Victoria Police and Victoria Fire to improve health and safety at the camp. "We've been working on larger paths of egress outside the tents so we can get stretchers or fire hoses in if need be." While they wait for the provincial and federal governments to find a solution to the homelessness crisis, they want a piece of land to keep their community going.

The arguments in the injunction hearing wrapped up last Tuesday but it's unclear when the judge will make his decision.



photo from 2014 breakfast

Good Friday Breakfast

It is Holy Week, ending with our service and breakfast at Centennial Square on Good Friday the 25th. We are to be there at 8am for set up. The service takes place at 9am and breakfast and coffee will follow the service. We are usually out of there by 12 noon. Once again this year Brian Cameron has kindly been organizing the breakfast; his email is:

briancameron@me.com

If you are free that day please contact Brian and offer your services. For Rev. Al, this is one of the most important things that we do publicly over the year.

Don't forget the meeting & day-long seminar:

**Tuesday, April 19, 11:30am - 3:30pm
Sands Funeral Home.**

Stuff we're doing this month:

As always, we're purchasing and distributing sleeping bags during our morning runs.

We provide ongoing financial support of the street family's dental needs.

Practicum Students: from its conception, The Dandelion Society has been fertile training ground for those entering into social work and the church. We are fortunate this spring to have two practicum students join us. **Patrick** is a theological student and will be ordained in late May. He will spend some time with the Dandelion Society under the direction of Reverend Al. **Tasha** will also be joining us for her practicum in the MHA program, which doesn't begin until May, also under Rev. Al's direction. We look forward to working with both of them in our role as "professors from the school of hard knocks", to help them understand the struggles of the poor.



There's still time to donate to our Easter Match campaign. Our goal is to raise \$50,000 so we can keep providing the street community with the support and supplies they need.

Please give today and help make this Easter special.