

For Immediate Release

CIBC FIRSTCARIBBEAN HELPS STREETLIGHT MINISTRIES TO FEED THE HOMELESS

Bridgetown, Barbados, 27 March 2023. Twenty years ago, when the members of the Street Lamp Ministries fed and ministered to the homeless in Bridgetown, they prepared approximately 30 meals and had to go looking for the homeless. Now, every Thursday come rain or shine, the group prepares meals and feeds approximately 175 persons and there is usually a line awaiting them when they arrive.

This was disclosed by the Streetlamp Ministries Team when they visited CIBC FirstCaribbean recently to collect a donation to help in their outreach programme, because, in addition to the weekly feeding programme, they also prepare care packages as needed for those who have no home or work and no means of getting these items. The group usually supplies food, clothing, toiletries and other basic needs.

Individual members of the group usually cook and then they get together at the Calvary Moravian Church Hall to package out the meals for distribution. The meals are then transported to Heroes Square where they are delivered to those in need around 6.30 p.m. every Thursday. Even during the pandemic curfew, members of the Streetlamp Ministries obtained passes to go and help feed the homeless.

When quizzed as to how they came up with the name, Bernadette Serieux explained that when they first started to do the feedings, there was one single streetlamp that worked by Heroes Square and the group used to serve the meals under that streetlamp, the only light they had at the time.

On presenting the funds, Managing Director Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, Donna Wellington commended the group on their sense of duty to helping others. “I really think that it is commendable what you do every single Thursday without fail and have been doing for the past 20 years. That is really looking out for your fellow man. CIBC FirstCaribbean is pleased to be able to help you in your efforts” she added.

Vice President of the Group Jerome Gittens explained that though they cater to 175 and sometimes more, these are not always homeless people, rather they are often persons who may be temporarily out of work or simply not able to make ends meet at a particular time. He also added that the group also counselled many of those coming for a meal, assisted those with health challenges to find help, and those looking to set up small businesses were referred to agencies who could facilitate them.

He added that they were often heartened when some of those they helped returned to express appreciation and explain that they had been able to move on and were in a better place but grateful for the support from the Streetlamp Group who were there in their moment of need.

Ends



Michelle Whitelaw, Director Retail Banking Channels at the CIBC FirstCaribbean hands over the funds to Jerome Gittens while from left Bernadette Serieux, Donna Wellington (second Right) and Ralph Holder Member of the Ministries (left) look on.

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