

bethlehem
housing and support services

BEST WISHES THIS

Holiday Season

& THROUGHOUT THE NEW YEAR



2021 Winter Newsletter

BETHLEHEMHOUSING.CA

MIGUEL'S JOURNEY

TO STABLE HOUSING

At Bethlehem Housing, we offer in-house and community support services for those living in our transitional and permanent housing, as well as people living in the community.

This is Miguel's Story,

“ For many years I struggled with drug addiction. I was in and out of several rehab's, support groups, and 12 step communities. I was not able to maintain long term abstinence from drugs. I have worked in the gaming industry for a very long time but suffered from a brain injury and found myself off work during the pandemic. My world crashed down. I had just left a long-term relationship and was struggling to cope with life as a single father with custody of a beautiful child.

Growing up in an unhealthy environment full of emotional and physical abuse, I continued to struggle. I decided to seek childhood trauma therapy to deal with my past issues as it was a recurring theme in my addiction. It was the best decision I made in my life. I started the journey to show my son a way out as he was dealing with issues of abandonment and abuse while he lived with his mother. The process was painful, yet I was able to implement goals and strategies for myself.

My clean date is October 26, 2020. I stopped using during the pandemic and turned to zoom meetings for support. I reached out to Bethlehem Place and met with a support worker that treated me with kindness, compassion, and empathy. We worked together over the next couple months with the goal of moving into Bethlehem Place. I continued to work with my support worker with the hopes of getting into Bethlehem Place and one day they called and let me know we could move in. It was probably one of the best days I had in a long time. I embraced the opportunity and became a willing participant in all the courses and classes that are offered to all tenants. These were perfect for me as I'm learning how to live all over again.

On this journey I am a person that has embraced the place of discomfort in many areas of my life as it's shown me how to challenge and motivate myself. My son and I are 5 months into our stay here at Bethlehem Place and our life has changed 1000%. Recently I've facilitated a couple rehab aftercare meetings for clients locally and love sharing my experience strength and hope with others. Bethlehem Place provides my son with after school snacks and crafts, and he feels included here. I am currently taking my teachers training course for yoga and reiki healing. This year has been the best year of my life spiritually, emotionally, and physically. I recently celebrated 1 year clean and with all the opportunities gifted me this year it has made our lives full of love and kindness. I have made some new friends in recovery and have stepped into the best version of myself. My son and I are worthy of a healthy life today. I truly am so blessed to have a fresh start at life, and I can't thank Bethlehem Place and all the staff enough for this great opportunity”.

Blessings to All,
Miguel



2021 Message & Reflections

FROM BETHLEHEM'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“The human capacity for burden is like bamboo – far more flexible than you’d ever believe at first glance”.

– Jodi Picoult, My Sister’s Keeper

The Resilience of Charitable Service Organizations

A life-destroying global pandemic. Anguished demands for racial and social justice. Thousands of Niagara families in financial freefall. Whiplash change across the social sector and with it, unpredictable funding flows. The pandemic crisis and these cascading challenges have tested our organizational design limits and shaken our fundamental approaches to service delivery. These past eighteen months have also exposed precarious social service gaps and enhanced the scope of the housing and homeless crisis playing out in our Niagara communities.

In the non-profit community, resilience is essential for achieving our everyday Mission-advancing work. Bethlehem, like many non-profit service charities, possess a well-honed process for continuously building and reinforcing our organizational resilience. But How? Well, as we navigated uncertainty, we summoned our creativity to pioneer new methods of service delivery and seized new opportunities to extend our reach.

The Resilience of People

We also take inspiration from the hundreds of people we serve, who push themselves with persistence beyond their limits to build resilience every day. People like Miguel who has shared his story here in our newsletter about his journey during the pandemic.

Imagine if you will, people like Miguel as he was isolated these past many months, away from the services that are his lifeline. He dug deep within himself, reached out and found he could build his resilience over time and through the help of others. We made sure he could continue to connect with supportive services using creative virtual solutions. But, at the other end of our technology tools are people.

Bethlehem is a place where people help people

Many who have come to Bethlehem for help need more than just a place to live. They need someone who will walk along with them on their journey to sustain housing, navigate systems, connect to services and resources, and to build back their dignity, well-being and quality of life. At Bethlehem, it is people who help people to bounce back and build resilience.

Your Gift is Your Hand Reaching Out

When you support Bethlehem with your gift, you too are holding the hand of Miguel and his son. You too are reaching out to those who are isolated or need a home to isolate in so that they can be safe.

This Christmas I hope you will see your way to be one of the people who help people at Bethlehem. This year a portion of your gift will be a gift for vulnerable children and families to ensure they experience a joyful Christmas!

We thank you and wish you a safe, happy holiday season filled with love, joy, and family.

Warmest Regards,



Lori Beech
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS



"My community support worker encouraged me to push myself forward to achieve the goals that we had planned out together, and I was able to learn how to overcome a number of obstacles".

- BETHLEHEM PROGRAM PARTICIPANT



"Without the services that Bethlehem provides I would not have the means to support my family. The people of Bethlehem took a huge weight from my shoulders and gave me the stable environment needed for my family to thrive".

- BETHLEHEM PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

What You Helped Us Achieve in 2021

54

FAMILIES INCLUDING 91 CHILDREN LIVED AT BETHLEHEM PLACE

233

HOUSEHOLDS LIVED IN OUR PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

117

PEOPLE WERE SERVED THROUGH OUR COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM

52

INDIVIDUALS WERE HOMELESS OR AT RISK OF BECOMING HOMELESS

65

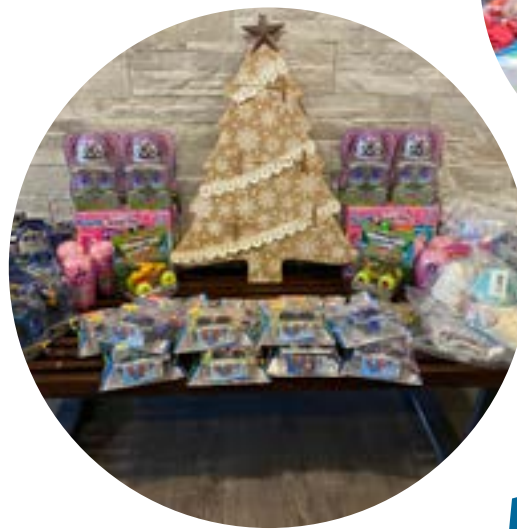
WOMEN WERE VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

98%

OF THOSE WHO MOVED OUT OF SUPPORTIVE HOUSING TRANSITIONED TO STABLE AND SECURE HOUSING

284

CHILD VISITS TO OUR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE



Bethlehem Lunch & Learn

Over the month of November, Bethlehem Housing and Support Services created a series of educational videos hosted by experienced knowledgeable staff at Bethlehem to bring awareness of the challenges that surround Niagara's affordable housing crisis.

Every Friday at noon a new video released on our YouTube channel, featuring a topic surrounding affordable housing. We hope that the creation of this series has helped give a better understanding of what organizations like Bethlehem achieve, and what we are hoping to change for the future! To watch our series, visit:

www.bethlehemhousing.ca/site/news-events/bethlehemplunchandlearn

Bethlehem Lunch & Learn



Exploring what WE can do!

Exploring what WE are doing!

bethlehem
HOUSING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

Americana Conference Centre, Niagara Falls

bethlehem
housing and support services

17th Annual Empty Bowls

presented by: **FirstOntario**
CREDIT UNION

5pm VIP Reception | 6pm Main Event

Tickets on sale December 8, 2021

\$85 Early Bird Price until January 31

(after January 31 tickets are \$95)

\$110 VIP Tickets

call to reserve a table of 10 or 12

905-641-1660 ext. 206

Proof of vaccination required

www.bethlehemhousing.ca/empty-bowls

VISIT BETHLEHEMHOUSING.CA AND SUBSCRIBE TO OUR MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER FOR STORIES AND UPDATES

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