

BEST WISHES THIS
Holiday Season
& THROUGHOUT THE NEW YEAR



2022 Winter Newsletter

Home For The Holidays



“

I don't know what I would have done without the help of the Community Outreach Support Program at Bethlehem Housing and Support Services. It saved my life, and my son's.

”



“

I would like people to know that Bethlehem Housing is a great organization that was there for me when I had nowhere to go, and that my support worker was there to help guide me every step of the way.

”



What You Helped Us Achieve in 2022

46

Families including **61** children lived at Bethlehem Place.

235

Households lived in our permanent supportive housing.

41

Moved on to live independently in community-based subsidized housing, including subsidized housing units in our permanent housing buildings.

71

Households were served through our community outreach program.

32

Individuals were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

41

Women were victims of domestic violence.

302

Child visits to our Early Learning Centre.



“

Christmas is a season for kindling the fire for hospitality in the hall, the genial flame of charity in the heart

– Washington Irving

”

2022 Message & Reflections

FROM BETHLEHEM'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The beautiful little girl on our cover this year lives at Bethlehem Place. Is she not our own little Cindy-Lou Who?!

In case you don't know who Cindy-Lou Who is, I suggest you sit down to watch any version of How the Grinch Stole Christmas. My family's favourite is the traditional cartoon version.

Cindy-Lou Who is a sweet and insightful little girl who understood that the true meaning of Christmas is for everyone to enjoy, and she said *"No one should be alone on Christmas. No matter how different a Who may appear, they will always be welcomed with holiday cheer!"*

We have 61 children living with us at Bethlehem Place this year and over 100 children live in our permanent affordable housing buildings. Children remind us that no matter who you are and what happens to you in your life, everyone deserves to feel welcomed and loved. In her little life, this little girl has experienced pandemic isolation and challenges that have brought her family to live with us at Bethlehem Place. We hope that this year will be different and better for her. You know as a Bethlehem supporter, that with your help, we will be able to do the best we can to ensure she has every opportunity to develop and thrive by helping her family through their healing journey.

Our families continue to struggle as they have over these past few years. Many have been experiencing additional anxieties from being isolated, and now with the impacts of inflation and high cost of living, they face food insecurity. Our families can occasionally access community food programs, but it is not enough. Although it is outside of our usual programs and supports, we had to add a food program as part of our service. We chose to make sure our food program included nutrient-dense food and fresh produce. With each donation this year, a portion will go towards our Christmas and Food program.

Every \$100 you donate this year to Bethlehem contributes to achieving our mission of "providing affordable housing and services to support the personal growth of individuals and families" in the following ways:

\$60 is for our families to access Support Service Programs through Transitional and Supportive Housing, outreach to clients in the community, and our EarlyOn Family and Children Resource Centres

\$20 this year will be for Christmas and Food Programs

\$10 will be used to help us invest in future affordable housing development

\$10 is for the cost of providing Housing Services administration for 250 tenant households and community engagement

Children like our little Cindy-Lou show us through her happy face, how important it is for children to experience magic and joy, especially at this time of year when it is celebrated. It is most truly Christmas when we celebrate it by giving the light of love to those who need it most. **For this, we thank you so very much.** This year when you send in your donation, please share your handwritten message of light and hope with our families in the enclosed card.

May this season find you among those you love, sharing in the twin glories of generosity and gratitude.

Lori Beech
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"It came without ribbons, it came without tags. It came without packages, boxes, or bags. Maybe Christmas (he thought) doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas perhaps means a little bit more." — The Grinch

William'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 William's Story.***



When your life comes crashing down around you, and you have too much pride to reach out to anyone, it can be difficult to look to organizations for help. I was injured on a job many years ago, and since then, things spiralled downhill. With minimal income, it was very difficult to keep a place. My life changed instantly when I won custody of my young son. I came to the realization that I was no longer just taking care of myself. I had my son who needed a good life, a loving father, and a family that loves him.

At the time, I was living in a hotel, when I brought my son to live with me. I needed more for him. It was time to swallow my pride. I was referred to Bethlehem Place and at the time I had a million things going through my mind. What will I do? Where will I go? Because of my living accommodations at a hotel, an appointment was set up for me to meet an intake worker at Bethlehem Place. I was nervous asking for help. After being connected with a Support Worker, I felt better knowing there were people genuinely wanting to help us. I felt very comfortable talking to my Support Worker to discuss my situation. The worker was always accommodating and would tell me to drop by. I could not believe all the times they would go out of their way to help me.

When I received a call to let me know that they had a 2-bedroom apartment for me and my son I was ecstatic and overwhelmed with joy knowing that I could leave my hotel room and have a place of my own. Everyone involved at Bethlehem continues to go over and above their job to make us feel welcomed, secure and belonging. I started to regularly attend many of their in-house programs on a variety of subjects and bring my son to activities with the EarlyOn Centre.

Without Bethlehem Place, I really don't know where my son and I would be right now. It's a very tough world out there and many people need help. Today, my son is now enrolled in school and is healthy, happy, and thriving. We have recently moved out of Bethlehem Place and have a permanent home in one of Bethlehem's other apartment buildings.

We could not be happier where we are today. The entire workforce at Bethlehem makes you feel so welcomed from the support workers to the office staff and to the maintenance people. They always make you feel at home, and for this, I want to say thank you.

Thank you to the community that made this all possible and made my dream a reality.



SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Americana Conference Centre, Niagara Falls

bethlehem
housing and support services

18th Annual Empty Bowls

presented by: **FirstOntario**
CREDIT UNION

5pm VIP Reception | 6pm Main Event

Tickets on sale 9AM December 5, 2022

\$85 Early Bird Price | \$110 VIP

Reserved Seating Only

www.bethlehemhousing.ca/empty-bowls

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

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bethlehem
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