

THE SHEPHERD

Good Shepherd Newsletter

Summer 2023



A special opening event was held on May 26 as special guests spoke about the importance of Dorothy Day Place. Present were Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Donna Skelly, MPP for Flamborough-Glanbrook; Neil Lumsden, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport; Brother Richard MaPhee, CEO of Good Shepherd; Brad Clark, Hamilton City Councillor; Katherine Kalinowski, COO of Good Shepherd Centres; and Jeffrey Neven, CEO of Indwell.

DOROTHY DAY PLACE OPENS DOORS FOR MARGINALIZED PEOPLE

Women, non-binary and transgender people opened the door to new opportunities on May 17, as Good Shepherd's Dorothy Day Place welcomed marginalized tenants to the refurbished building on Arkledun Avenue in Hamilton.

Katherine Kalinowski, chief operating officer of Good Shepherd Centres, explains the importance of the building and its programs:

"Homelessness devastates the lives of individuals and threatens the resilience and health of our entire community. The crisis we face is growing in ferocity but has been germinating for a very long time.

"We need only look at occupancy rates in our local emergency shelters to understand the challenges we face. In 12 months at Good Shepherd Mary's Place, an emergency shelter for single women experiencing homelessness, occupancy has averaged 104 percent. Shelter staff turned women away from the shelter due to lack of space on 1,568 occasions – or 131 times per month.

"We know that women's homelessness has long been undercounted as women hide in plain sight. We know that transgender, non-binary, and gender-diverse people who are houseless face exceptional risks and extraordinary barriers to finding a home, and that Indigenous people are disproportionately represented

amongst those who are homeless as a result of both the historical and current impacts of colonialism.

"Dorothy Day Place is a better place for women, transgender and gender diverse people to call home.

"Today, we are reminded that we have the knowledge and tools to create real and lasting change. While it is a moral imperative that we respond with urgency and immediacy to the homelessness crisis, we must pursue the systemic changes that will allow us to end homelessness rather than manage it – adequate income, holistic health and human services and, of course, further investment in affordable, supportive housing that truly meets the needs of people who face the most significant barriers to achieving and maintaining a place to call home and to living as fully engaged, respected members of our communities.

"We are fortunate to do this work as part of a larger community of organizations who are committed to the notion that housing is a human right and that transformation is possible with shared vision, meaningful collaboration and attendance to voices of lived experience.

"I want to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of all of the partners and colleagues who brought this project to life.

"We never lose sight of what a privilege it is to walk alongside the strong, creative, dynamic people who will call this place their home."

YOUR DONATIONS IN USE

How you are helping the community



Graduates from Good Shepherd's Class of 2023.

'EXCITED TO SEE WHERE LIFE TAKES ME'

A high school diploma can be the key that unlocks opportunities for a brighter future through post-secondary education and employment. Many of our community's marginalized young people have walked through the doors of Good Shepherd Youth Services and into a future that is bright and optimistic. Students at Good Shepherd's two alternative learning classrooms have faced barriers in their young lives and are grateful to have overcome diversity as they are handed their secondary school graduation diploma. Good Shepherd and the students' families celebrated their accomplishments on June 12. Cassidy Hearn, the valedictorian and young mom from the Jeanne Scott Parent & Child Resource Centre, spoke on behalf of her classmates. Here are excerpts of her speech:

"Our children motivate us to become the best person we could be for ourselves and our families, and now we get to show our children the results of all our hard work. We persevered through every obstacle, every barrier, every illness, along with each bump and bruise that the childminding staff kissed until we could be there.

"On behalf of my peers, I would like to thank everyone involved in this amazing program that was thoughtfully created by Good Shepherd and the Hamilton Catholic District School Board for young parents to reach their goals of graduation, as well as important personal and parenting goals. Thank you for supporting us in our everyday lives.

"My story is not so different from others in my class. As a freshman in my first year of high school, I was focused on my social life rather than grades. I

skipped school, began experimenting with drugs and found myself in the wrong crowd. Deep down I knew I was hurting myself and I tore my family apart, trying to find out who I was. I did not know where I was headed, and I could not picture a future for myself. After falling pregnant at just 16 years old, my first-born child became my only purpose in life. Five years later, as a single mom and high school dropout, I found myself in the hands of the wonderful staff at Regina's Place... This program's structure has been a space focused on creating personal responsibility and supporting each student's busy lifestyle. It allows us to work at our own pace while not feeling pressured, while learning skills that we can take with us wherever we go.

"I believe if there were more schools like the Jeanne Scott Parent & Child Resource Centre, more single parents would have the confidence to strive for greatness. If it were not for this village, I would not be standing here today or starting my diploma in Graphic Design at Mohawk College this September. Finally, I'd like to thank my Dad for always believing in me and encouraging me to be the best person and mother I could be. Thank you for pushing me to chase my dreams. You are the reason I am here today.

"I am excited to see where life takes me in the coming years. I am confident that each of us will find our way through the difficulties of finishing our education whilst taking care of our little ones. Walt Disney once said that 'All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.' ... Chase your dreams and consider your passions when thinking about your next steps."

"I believe if there were more schools like the Jeanne Scott Parent & Child Resource Centre, more single parents would have the confidence to strive for greatness."

Cassidy Hearn





HOUSING SERVICES

18,023 marginalized youth in Hamilton participated in Notre Dame's meal program in 2022.

In 2022, **1,610** women & children were accommodated at Martha House and **400** homeless & street-involved women were safe at Mary's Place

In May 2023, **73** new units were opened for women, transgender and non-binary people at Dorothy Day Place.



Affordable housing in Hamilton is at a premium and is painfully hard to find. The City of Hamilton's waiting list for housing applicants is well over 6,000.



In Hamilton, Good Shepherd has **123** units that accommodate clients from across programs, including Women's Services, Youth Service and HOMES.

Townhouse and semi-detached homes in Hamilton make up an **additional 39** bedrooms.

In Toronto, **279** persons were housed in 2022. Currently, there are **297** housing units in Toronto.

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COMMUNITY IN ACTION



CYCLING WITHOUT AGE

Volunteers from Cycling Without Age, including our former Good Shepherd employee Lorraine Chapman (centre in yellow), introduced Good Shepherd clients to their program recently. Cycling Without Age takes passengers on rides primarily at Hamilton's West Harbourfront and on multi-use paths in downtown Burlington. It's an incredible opportunity for seniors with mobility issues to enjoy Hamilton's waterfront.



TAKEOUT AT NOTRE DAME

Good Shepherd Youth Services is a lifeline for many young people who need a meal or a safe place to stay. The youth shelter in downtown Hamilton serves about 1,800 meals a month to youth who are street-involved, homeless, or facing housing instability and are financially vulnerable.

There are many reasons why youth don't want to take part in indoor meals offered through Notre Dame House. To reduce the barriers, a take-out window was created. Now at least half of the meals are served through the window.

A Message from Cathy Wellwood

Chief Development Officer



In May, Good Shepherd was proud to open Dorothy Day Place, permanent housing for women, non-binary and transgender people. It was developed to help address the crisis of homelessness in our community and offer, affordable housing to the people who often face difficulty finding and maintaining a place to call home. Dorothy Day Place will be a compassionate community presence while supporting people who have experienced homelessness, trauma and social exclusion.

Dorothy Day Place was funded by an investment of \$25,808,665 through a partnership between Good Shepherd and the Government of Canada Reaching Home and Rapid Housing Initiatives, the Province of Ontario Social Services Relief Fund and the City of Hamilton. But most importantly, our generous donors jumped on board and enthusiastically ensured that the building is complete so we could welcome 73 tenants into their beautiful new studio apartments. Good Shepherd could not continue to help the city's marginalized people without the kindness of our donors. When you give to a project like Dorothy Day Place, you aren't just donating to a building, you are providing hope and optimism, which is a true expression of Good Shepherd's value of Hospitality.

We're grateful and blessed by your continued support for the people who need it most. Have a great summer!

God bless you,

Good Shepherd
Faith in people.

THE FOLD

Join us each month as Brother Richard MacPhee, Good Shepherd's Chief Executive Officer, shares his conversations with community leaders, Good Shepherd coworkers, and partners who inspire and influence transformation for the most vulnerable and marginalized people in our community.

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Join **SHEPHERDS OF CHANGE**

When you join the Shepherds of Change, your reliable monthly gift, no matter how big or small, will make an incredible difference here at Good Shepherd, and in the lives of the people we serve.

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General Inquiries

400 King Street West, PO Box 1003, Hamilton ON L8N 3R1
Phone: 905.528.6565 • info@gsch.ca
goodshepherdcentres.ca

Donation Inquiries

Phone: 905.572.6435 • Fax: 905.528.6967
donations@gsch.ca • goodshepherdcentres.ca/donate