

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER

# The Shepherd



**“It tells people that they are worth something.”**

- Brother Richard MacPhee, CEO

**INSIDE:** How you're helping turn a long-held dream into real care and support for vulnerable neighbours experiencing homelessness.

## Dear friend,

As another long Hamilton winter comes to an end, I find myself deeply grateful for you.

Because of your support, countless men, women, and children in our community found warmth, comfort, and connection, these past months. From the man who no longer had to sleep in a tent in extremely cold weather, to the young child bundled up in a warm snowsuit thanks to good neighbours like you.

And with spring finally here, my thoughts turn to the grace of new beginnings—from the newfound hope of those who just gathered here to share in the promise of Easter, to the exciting new chapter you are helping take shape here at 135 Mary Street.

Every day, no matter the season, we feel the warmth of our community's compassion. In this issue of *The Shepherd*, you'll read about just a few of the ways that compassion is changing neighbours' lives.

Nothing within these pages would be possible without you. So once again, thank you, and God bless you.



*Bro. Richard OH*

Brother Richard MacPhee, OH  
Chief Executive Officer  
Good Shepherd

# Your gifts in action

## 630

Safe, warm beds every night for men, women, and families in need.

## 16,500

Meals served every month for neighbours facing hunger.

## 3,647

People going through mental health crisis received 24/7 care at Barrett Centre.

## 1,481

Women and their children found a safe haven and a fresh start at Martha House.



*“I don’t know what my life would have been without you. That day I first came here, just knowing I wasn’t alone, it was like a light finally went on in the dark.”*

- Stephanie\*, Good Shepherd client

\*Name changed to protect privacy

# An Exciting New Chapter Begins – Thanks to You

For more than 60 years, the Good Shepherd Centre has been a place of refuge, dignity, and hope. Now, with your support, a new chapter is about to begin.

Since 1961, the doors at 135 Mary Street have opened again and again, a welcome haven for those with nowhere else to go. Inside, there has always been warmth: a hot meal, a safe bed, a kind word, and the quiet reassurance that someone cares.

Thousands of people have passed through those doors. And for many, it was the first step towards change, made possible by caring people like you.

“This building has long been at the heart of our Mission,” shares Brother Richard MacPhee, Good Shepherd’s CEO. For Brother Richard, the building holds a personal significance as well. He began his journey as a Brother here and has witnessed countless lives changed within its walls. Now, that legacy will be the foundation for an exciting new chapter.

## You’re making a long-held dream a reality.

Homelessness in Hamilton has grown and changed over the decades. Today, many of the men Good Shepherd serves are living with complex challenges, from addiction to serious medical and mental health concerns. The pandemic made it even clearer that traditional shelters can only go so far. The new housing complex at 135 Mary Street will offer something new and transformational.

First, it will meet the rising need. While the Good Shepherd Centre provides emergency shelter to up to 54 men a night, the new building will include 156 apartments, each with a private room, a door that locks, and a bathroom of one’s own.



*“It’s about dignity, it tells people they are worth something. That we want to invest in them – and help them invest in themselves.”*

The new space will offer more than a roof overhead. Thanks to 24/7 support and an on-site medical clinic, the residents will build life skills, address medical and mental health concerns, and prepare for the next step toward permanent housing.

“We want to help people put down some roots,” Brother Richard explains, “so they can begin to work on whatever brought them to homelessness.”

Community is central to that vision. The building will include shared gathering spaces, group programs, and opportunities for residents—and the wider community—to come together to support one another.

“People need a home, meaningful activity, and a connection to their neighbours. That’s where real change happens, and that’s what this new place will represent.”

None of this would be possible without the generous support of the provincial and federal governments, the City of Hamilton, and generous donors like you.

**Thank you for changing countless lives within the walls of the Good Shepherd Centre since it opened over 60 years ago. And thank you for helping make this new chapter a reality—creating a hopeful future for countless neighbours for years to come.**

# Astrid's light lives on

A life-changing legacy gift, inspired by a beloved sister.



**Freya smiles as she remembers her sister, Astrid. “She was a beautiful person—and she had a beautiful life. She had many friends. She found joy in music, the arts, nature, and in the animals she loved so much. She cared deeply about people, and gave of herself generously to help others.”**

Sadly, Astrid's life was changed forever by mental illness, eventually leaving her homeless. “We did our best to help her,” Freya says, “but at the time, she closed herself off from her family. Then, Good Shepherd came into her life.”

For over 20 years, Good Shepherd walked alongside Astrid, helping her find an apartment, navigate daily challenges, and receive the medical and mental health care she needed. Together with Freya, they helped Astrid regain her independence and reclaim the things that gave her life meaning: community, creativity, and the joy of helping others.

**“Good Shepherd basically gave her back her life,” Freya shares.**

Deeply grateful for the care her sister received, Freya decided to give in Astrid's name to help others just as she had been helped. Together, the sisters chose to support Good Shepherd's Supportive Housing in Toronto, as well as the Creative Works Studio—a place of healing through the arts—a cause that meant so much to Astrid.

Freya has also made the incredibly meaningful decision to leave a gift in her Will to Good Shepherd, in honour of Astrid.

**“I chose Good Shepherd because they were the charity that did the most for someone I love,” Freya shares.**



## The Heart of our Work: Volunteer Spotlight

*“I volunteer with Good Shepherd because I believe in the dignity of every person, especially those living on the margins. Serving through this ministry is not just an act of charity—it's an act of solidarity. It's where faith meets action, and where love becomes tangible.*”

*Many of the individuals we encounter have faced unimaginable hardship—poverty, isolation, addiction, and displacement. But in each face, I see the image of God. Volunteering allows me to stand beside them, not above them, offering not just food or shelter, but respect, companionship, and hope.”*

- Thomas John Fauteux, Volunteer

# Volunteer Opportunities

**Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do.** By sharing your time and your gifts, you can change countless lives, make new friends, and make our community a better place for all. If you'd like to learn more about current volunteer opportunities, please visit: [goodshepherdcentres.ca/volunteer](https://goodshepherdcentres.ca/volunteer), or email us at [volunteer@gsch.ca](mailto:volunteer@gsch.ca).

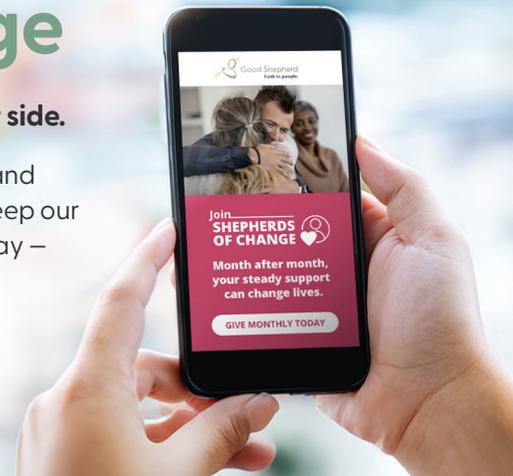


## Join the Shepherds of Change

**Our community depends on us every month, and we invite you to stand by our side.**

By joining our special circle of monthly donors, the Shepherds of Change, your steady and reliable support will be the heartbeat of our mission, helping us plan in advance and keep our programs going strong. You'll be there every month, every day, and every step of the way – providing the security, stability, and support that truly restores lives.

To learn more about joining the Shepherds of Change, visit us at: [www.goodshepherdcentres.ca/campaigns/monthly](https://www.goodshepherdcentres.ca/campaigns/monthly).



## Walk alongside them for generations to come

With every moment of kindness and gesture of generosity, you have walked alongside your neighbours in need. When you make the meaningful decision to include Good Shepherd as part of your legacy, you aren't just supporting someone step-by-step. You're guiding the way forward for countless people who will feel you there beside them for many years to come.

If you would like to learn more about how a gift in your Will can change countless lives in our community for years to come contact Cathy Wellwood at: **905.528.6565 x3338** or email [CWellwood@gsch.ca](mailto:CWellwood@gsch.ca).



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