

More than a shelter

Update



35 Waller Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7G4 • Tel. 613-234-1144 Fax 613-234-2813 • www.ottawamission.com Winter 2007

“Invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed.” - Luke 14:13-14



Christmas is a time to share the celebration of God's love

Jesus said that if you invite your wealthy neighbours and friends when you prepare a special feast, they will invite you to their homes in return for your generosity.

He tells us that our reward will be much greater if we invite those who have nothing to give us in return – who come to us empty and lonely and poor. Their gratitude and their joy will make us rich.

As we think about the Christmas season and the plans we will make for our family and friends, we ask you to remember those who are alone and in need. The men and women who will come to share the

Christmas feast at The Ottawa Mission will come at your invitation. It is your generosity and kindness that will allow us to offer food and fellowship to more than 2000 hungry, lonely, needy people that day.

We will invite the homeless in our community to our Christmas meal on Sunday December 16. Your donations of time and money will help us prepare this feast and you will be richly rewarded for your hospitality and your generosity.

www.ottawamission.com



Diane Morrison
Executive Director, The Ottawa Mission

What is really important?

Josh is a young man in his late thirties. At his graduation from our drug and alcohol rehabilitation program, he began his speech like this:

“The year 2006 was the worst year of my life. I was actually out of jail for only two weeks.”

But he resolved to make a change in his life and by October of 2007 he had graduated from our LifeHouse rehabilitation program.

He spoke about a renewed faith in God and about the hope that life would get better. He spoke about respect for people – something that he had not had, and of dignity after so many years of feeling worthless. He thanked people for the second chance he had been given and was grateful for the forgiveness of a community that cares. He shared about the love he felt for his children. These were the things that were now really important to him.

The Christmas Story is a story of faith, hope, love and forgiveness. This Christmas may you enjoy all the important things that Josh has discovered in his life.

It is through your donations that Josh had an opportunity to change his life. Thank you for supporting The Ottawa Mission.

May God bless you and grant you peace.

The LifeHouse Rehabilitation Program receives no government funding and is partially funded by United Way. If you wish to support this program, you can designate your United Way donation. If you would like more information on the program, log on to our website at www.ottawamission.com or call 613-234-1155.

You can now donate online

Simply visit The Ottawa Mission's website
www.ottawamission.com

There is a convenient and secure form so that you can make single or monthly gifts.

When a donation is given online, your personal information remains confidential. Credit card information is destroyed after use.

You can help us cut costs

Ottawa's hungry, homeless men, women and children rely on The Ottawa Mission 365 days a year. But some months, it's a real challenge to feed, shelter and care for all of them!

A regular monthly gift is an easy and effective way of giving.

It helps The Ottawa Mission by allowing us to effectively plan for a consistent level of funding. You can become a "friend of the friendless" through automatic credit card or chequing/savings account deductions each month.



Please contact Alison at 613-234-1144 ext. 294 or by email at legacygiving@ottawamission.com

Christmas is a time for family

In the Home Hospice at The Ottawa Mission, family can mean many different things.

Chris had been with us for some time. His mental illness made him afraid to let anyone into his world. As he came to trust us we were able to comfort and care for him until the end. He let the staff of the Home Hospice at The Ottawa Mission become his family.

Ron came to us from another shelter. He stayed with his “street family” until they could no longer care for him. Then he came to our hospice where his friends shared meals and quiet moments with him until he passed away.

George was very ill. His elderly father was trying to look after him but he was exhausted. When we took over the medical care of his son, it allowed him the time to



A volunteer shares a smile and a snack with one of the residents of the Home Hospice.

be the loving family member that George needed in his life.

Chris, Ron and George each had a unique kind of family. But each family was caring and loving.

The Home Hospice at The Ottawa Mission is busy as Christmas approaches. There are decorations to be hung, wish lists to be made and goodies to be shared.

At the Home Hospice at The Ottawa Mission we celebrate Christmas as most families do, with turkey dinner, gifts, friendship and fellowship.

It is a place filled with laughter, and, most importantly for the residents of the hospice, it is a home and a family.

A lesson on the street

As I arrived for my afternoon volunteer session, I popped quarters into the parking meter, called out my “hellos” to the gentlemen milling about and rushed into the dental clinic at The Ottawa Mission. Seven patients and two and a half hours later I realized that I had to put more money in the meter! I rushed out, expecting a cluster of tickets on my car. As I got closer, I heard a shout from a man standing by the curb.

“Don’t worry doc, we fed the meter for you!”

I was humbled and touched by this thoughtfulness and generosity. Even those who have little can teach us precious lessons about the character of God and His grace.

I am grateful for the experience that introduced me to the presence of Jesus in some of the people we see as being most broken. It gave me hope that I too can be the presence of Christ in a fallen world.

– Tom Harle, DDS, Dental Program Manager, The Ottawa Mission

“We all just take life for granted”

Even though they seem to have so little, Sandy has learned that the residents of The Ottawa Mission have a lot to share

Sandy Lapointe has been coming to volunteer at The Ottawa Mission for almost three years, and she loves it. Since she retired, she has been helping prepare and serve the evening meal once a week.

Sandy feels like she’s part of the family here.

“We all enjoy having dinner each night with our families. Preparing dinner for the residents of The Ottawa Mission is like making dinner for my family.”

Sandy catches up on the week’s happenings with the men as they come through to get their meals. She looks forward to hearing their news and seeing their smiles.

“You smile at them and that’s all they need. It just changes them.”

“You get to know their names, and they know yours. There’s a real feeling of community around the supper table here.”

“I miss my evening conversations with John. He was always reading a book and he’d share that with me.” (John had been ill and he passed away this summer.)

On December 16 we will serve turkey dinner to more than 2000 hungry and lonely members of our community. Christmas is a family time. Like Sandy, you can be a part of our family this Christmas through your gifts of time and money. God bless you for your generosity.



Sandy says that when she walks out of here after dinner, “I just feel good!”

The wonders of God’s love

Even empty hearts are filled with joy!

“Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let earth receive her King.”

It is a Tuesday morning in September and the words to this familiar Christmas carol are being sung in the chapel of The Ottawa Mission. This hymn of praise is a favourite with the lonely and homeless men and women who attend morning chapel services here. The words speak to everyone, and everyone knows the words.

The promise in the music is that every heart, no matter how humble or how empty, can be filled by the love of God. No matter who we are, we are all welcome to sing His praise and receive Him among us.

In summer and in winter, even here in a shelter, every heart can rejoice. The love of the Lord is here.

Jesse was determined to succeed

“He just jumped on the bus. We didn’t know where he was going.”

Four years ago, Jesse had no idea where he was going. He had been dealing with addiction issues for much of his adult life.

He had been in and out of jail, and had tried several treatment programs in the past.

But Jesse was determined to turn his life around.

“I came here right from jail. I heard about The Ottawa Mission’s [addiction treatment] program from a guy I met at a Bible study.”

“I walked into the Day Program and I knew that I wanted to stay here and go to LifeHouse.”

That was last March. The next six months would change Jesse’s life. He attended anger management workshops, as well as twelve-step



Jesse and his grandmother, Hilda, are going to be a family again this Christmas.

classes and individual counselling sessions. He volunteered in the community, and in the kitchen at The Ottawa Mission.

He learned a lot about himself and he learned new tools for living.

When Jesse graduated from LifeHouse in October, he invited a special guest. His grandmother,

Hilda, came all the way from southern Ontario on the bus to be with her grandson. She hadn’t seen him in over two years, but she always believed he would find his way.

This Christmas, Jesse will be with his grandmother for the holidays.

The Day Program has made all the difference to Gerry and his family

Gerry has been invited to his mother’s for Christmas dinner.

Now that may not sound unusual, but for Gerry it’s going to be a very special Christmas with a family he hasn’t seen in three years.

Gerry has been working hard to deal with his addictions by attending the Day Program at The Ottawa Mission.

This program has been a life-saver for him. He can come for counselling in the morning and still make it, on time and sober, to his job.

Gerry’s parents are so happy with the progress he has been making that they want him to come and share Christmas as a family this year.

A Family Celebration

Christmas has different meanings for everyone, but family is always important.

Richard came to Client Services at The Ottawa Mission for help finding an apartment that he could afford.

He had been coming for about a month, and was eager to be in his own place for the winter. He was also looking forward to spending Christmas with his family.

Richard wants to share Christmas dinner at The Ottawa Mission with his family this year.

His sister and her family invited him to their home for dinner, but he felt he needed to bring them here.

He said it was because The Ottawa Mission had played such a big role in his life over the years and he wanted his family to understand a bit of what he had experienced.



It's the people you call family who make the difference.

He feels the staff and volunteers at The Ottawa Mission are his special family and he wants his “real” family to meet us.

For the homeless and the needy, like Richard, it's not where you are or what you are eating that's most

important. It's the people you call family who make the difference.

Because of the support of our donors and volunteers, lost and lonely people like Richard can know that they have a special, caring family at The Ottawa Mission.

Ensuring the hungry will be fed in years to come

The Ottawa Mission's 2nd Annual Estate Planning Seminar

On September 24th, more than 200 donors participated in The Ottawa Mission's 2nd Annual Estate Planning Seminar.

“The seminar was energetic and informative,” said Mrs. Randolph, who attended this year's event. “I learned how I can help homeless people through a bequest.”

Through careful estate planning, donors learned how to leave significant gifts in their Wills to help Ottawa's homeless through The Ottawa Mission, ensuring that the hungry will be fed for years to come.

If you would like to receive a copy of the literature provided at the seminar, please contact Alison Forestell at 613-234-1144 ext. 294 or by email at legacygiving@ottawamission.com

A Thirty Second Life

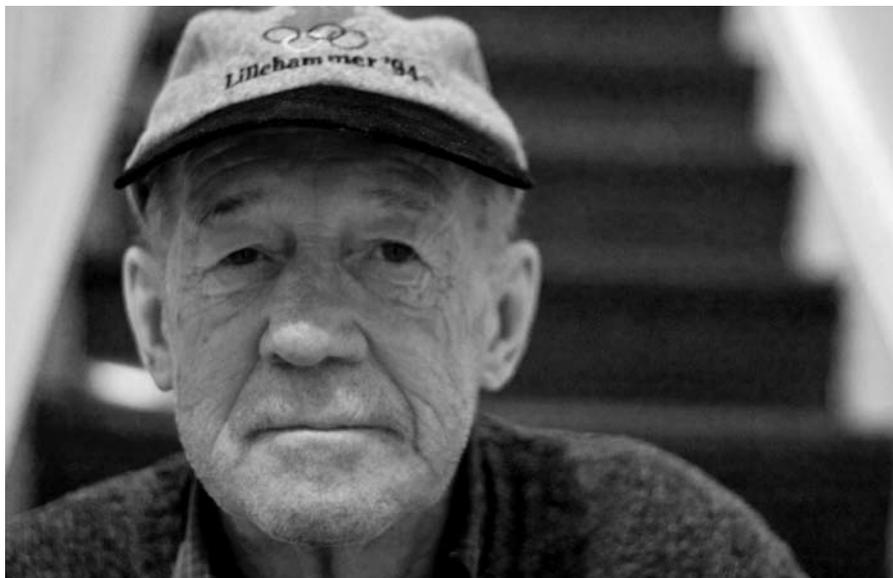
Thirty seconds. It often feels like this is all the time we have to attend to matters of importance. And it is not because we don't care – our lives have just begun to unfold at a speed that brings the next important matter along before we have time to deal with the last one.

This pace works fine until we confront something that cannot be fixed quickly. Like an illness. Or the loss of a loved one. Or, as is often the case at The Ottawa Mission, addiction and homelessness.

Every act of compassion that brings healing and hope takes time.

Consider that God's work of healing and change began at Christmas 2000 years ago and still continues.

It is good to be reminded by the Christmas story, that as we undertake our acts of kindness towards one another, they usually require



longer than the thirty seconds life now tries to allocate for the things that matter to us.

We are grateful to you our donors, because you have consistently offered life-changing gifts to those who need time to heal and make changes in their lives.

The essence of the Christmas story is that we are called to resist the urge to look for a thirty second fix, and instead find the time for those who are hurting.

May God bless you for taking your time to do this for the homeless this Christmas.

Rev. Laird Eddy

Gifts of
HOPE
that ch

**Celebrate the Season
by giving meaningful gifts
from our Christmas
Hope Cata
and frie**

The Christmas season is a time full of wonder and hope. It is the time of year to celebrate Christ's birth and generously share our love for family, friends and colleagues. It's in this same spirit that we offer
The Ottawa Mission 2007 Christmas Gift Catalogue.

Our Christmas Gift Catalogue is filled with truly meaningful gifts you can purchase to honour your loved ones. You will find gift ideas for every person on your list and for every budget. At the same time you will be making a difference in the lives of homeless men, women and children in the Ottawa community.

Every gift will make a huge difference in the lives of those who have very little.

**You can order from our catalogue online at
www.ottawamission.com
or by calling us 613-234-1155**

They believed they weren't smart ... until now, that is

Recently three men stood in front of family, friends and staff to accept their diplomas from The Ottawa Mission's Stepping Stones Learning Centre.

Sean, Darryl and Paul each graduated with a high school equivalency diploma.

"This was a dream come true for these men – some had been told that they were not smart while they were in school and they believed it ... until now," says Diane Morrison, Executive Director, The Ottawa Mission.

"Receiving their high school diploma is a turning point in the lives of these men."



Jim Orban, Publisher, The Ottawa Citizen, joined Diane Morrison, Executive Director of The Ottawa Mission at the graduation

Ottawa Citizen Publisher Jim Orban was the guest speaker at the Stepping Stones Learning Centre graduation.

"The hope that literacy and education bring to the men of The Ottawa Mission cannot be understated – it is a new lease, it means new skills, new opportunities," says Jim Orban.

"It means pride in the accomplishment and that the community is proud and inspired by their incredible example of self improvement."

Our Mission Statement

The Ottawa Mission reflects Jesus' love in serving the homeless, the hungry and the lost by providing food, shelter, clothing and skills and offers faith and hope for building a wholesome future.

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Direct Mail Frequency

Reaching out to a community the size and scope of Ottawa is a challenge that is met most effectively through the power of mail. Every mail campaign that we do helps us to find many new and caring donors.

Periodically we blanket neighbourhoods with unaddressed mail, in order to find new people who want to help the homeless. This may result in you receiving two pieces of mail – one that is addressed to you, and one that is part of our "blanket" mailing. Should you receive one of these unaddressed pieces of mail, we ask that you give it to someone who might share your concern for the homeless. If you would like to adjust your mail frequency, please call 613-234-1155.

The Ottawa Mission does not sell or trade its mailing list.

Thank you to all our donors and supporters.
We could not do it without you!