



**You can give
the gift of Hope
this Christmas**

— AND —
*change lives
everyday*

 **Give Today**

FOR ONLY \$4.68, YOU CAN PROVIDE A HOT MEAL AND HOPE TO PEOPLE LIKE MARY.

Hot meals. Warm beds. Vital services.
Your gift provides all this and more to Ottawa's
most vulnerable people.



Development Office
46 Daly Avenue
Ottawa, ON K1N 6E4
613-234-1155
OttawaMission.com

***Read Mary's story of
Hope on page 8.***

“The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.”

JOHN 1:4-5

CHAMPIONS OF
HOPE

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GOOD TIDINGS WE BRING



Christmas, New Year’s, and the entire holiday season is a time where we take a pause from our busy lives, gather with family and loved ones to spread love, gifts, and cheer, and reflect on the year that was. I’d like to take the opportunity to do the same with this Christmas newsletter.

As COVID-19 restrictions tapered off throughout the year, we were blessed to return much of the programming that makes The Ottawa Mission, **More Than a Shelter**, back to pre-pandemic status.

That means we resumed community client intake for our vital Addiction and Trauma Services, welcomed clients and the community back into our dining room for both everyday and holiday meals, and returned to in-person instruction and graduations at our Discovery University, just to name a few pieces of good news.

In this newsletter, you’ll learn the stories of Brian and Mary, two clients who help spread holiday cheer within our walls. Mary is a familiar friendly face at our community meal services, and Brian helped bring Christmas to our Hospice. You’ll also read about Andre, who shares how our *Housing* and *Client Services* team helped him get home for Christmas.

While our vulnerable clients face daily hardships, your committed support and generosity ensures that they find some hope, relief, and joy. With your help, we’re able to share these good tidings at Christmastime.

Our very best wishes to you and your family for a safe and happy holidays,

SHAUN BARON
Chair, Board of Directors, The Ottawa Mission



Brian admires his
decorating handiwork

Brian DECKS OUR HOSPICE HALLS

Despite an upbringing that was difficult at times, Brian has fond Christmas memories from his childhood. With his father struggling with alcohol and often not around, his mother worked extra hard to make Christmastime memorable for Brian and his seven siblings.

“Mom made Christmas a special day for us kids. It didn’t matter how badly off we were.” he recalls. **“I remember one of my brothers picking me up to put candy canes on the tree.”**

Brian carried those pleasant memories throughout a challenging life. Eventually, his declining health saw him check into our *Diane Morrison Hospice*. As Christmas approached, Brian felt that our existing decorations just didn’t have the right look. But he knew just how he could help out.

With his childhood memories in mind, Brian set out to purchase the perfect Christmas decorations. Overall, his journey was a success, save for one decoration of yore: Brian was frustrated to learn they no longer make nor sell “Angel Hair”, the ethereal tree decoration made of spun glass that he remembers so fondly from this youth.

Despite that minor setback, Brian soon had the Hospice, including a tree, decorated to his liking. And everyone agreed that Brian had brought Christmas spirit to the building.

Brian applies the holiday tradition of giving year-round. Even though he doesn’t have a lot of money to spare, he recently made a generous donation to a charity that funds cleft repair surgeries in Africa!

His compassion will see that children receive the care they need, just as your compassion ensures that Brian receives the love and care he deserves.

Brain says: **“I just want to help, and give them a chance. They’re the future of tomorrow.”**

Thank you for your Christmas spirit and inspiring us during this season of giving, Brian!

A DECADE OF *Christmases and Hope*

— AT —
**THE OTTAWA
MISSION**



Peter all bundled up at a winter event

The first half of this year marked two big milestones for Peter, our CEO here at The Ottawa Mission. His first was reaching 10 years in his *leadership* role as CEO.

Naturally at this time of year, Peter reflects back on his first Mission Christmas over a decade ago. He recalls a busy Christmas Dinner service, where sadly, the swelling holiday spirit was punctured by two heartbreaking incidents within the shelter. In separate, unrelated moments of desperation, two clients attempted to take their own lives. One client was saved while the other was lost.

Peter remembers being shocked and asking himself: “How could someone do that to themselves on Christmas?”

It was a moment of stark realization. For some, Christmas is a joyous occasion, warmed by nostalgic childhood memories. For others, it can be a reminder of what is missing, has been lost, or was sadly never there in the first place.

Despite the struggles that some of our clients may face over the holidays, **The Ottawa Mission always endeavors to provide a special, meaningful Christmas to everyone under our roof.**

Peter shares: *“While everyone has their own, sometimes troubled past, God has put us here at this time to be there for our clients in the present, which includes doing our very best to give them a special Christmas. And in doing that, we want to inspire some hope for their future.”*

Peter knows about *the power of hope*. The second big milestone that he achieved this year was reaching 15 years of sobriety.

In a media piece released by The CBC earlier this year, Peter opened up about his former addiction to alcohol and his road to recovery. He shared that the key factor needed along anyone’s path to recovery, no matter their affliction, is hope.

At The Ottawa Mission we know that it is you, our donors, who make it possible for us to provide hope over the holidays. In addition to our usual programs and our much-awaited Christmas dinner, we also collaborate with *Backpacks for the Homeless*, where our Frontline staff place backpacks full of goodies including chocolate, toiletries, socks, and Tim’s gift cards at the foot of each client’s bed on Christmas Eve. Holiday movies are shown in the Chapel, there’s a Santa dress-up, and so much more.

After 10 years of amazing leadership, Peter knows who to pass his gratitude along to:

“Thank you, our precious donors, and God Bless you in helping us provide some hope during this meaningful time of year.

Your generosity makes all that we do around Christmas possible.”



A home — FOR THE — holidays



Elizabeth, Andre, and his beloved dog Bo share a smile

Andre, a former naval officer now in his senior years, has a wealth of experience living and working across Canada and in different parts of the world. But a debilitating heart condition and memory loss meant that one day, Andre found himself unable to work. Eventually, he was without a home and staying in our shelter.

“When you’re living in a shelter, it’s frustrating because you’re not home. And when someone treats you with kindness, it makes all the difference in the world,” he says.

That someone Andre is speaking of is his case manager Elizabeth and The Ottawa Mission as a whole. *“The Ottawa Mission saved my neck; I want to thank God for The Mission.”*

Many barriers might prevent clients from being able to find housing. Andre’s condition meant he had difficulty finding and tracking the information and paperwork needed to secure a home.

Elizabeth helped Andre navigate and resolve his issues, including his most pressing one — finding a home. She found a safe, affordable one-bedroom apartment that Andre is now proud to call home. But it doesn’t end there. Once a client is successfully housed, The Mission team ensures that they remain housed. Staff keep in regular touch with Andre, helping him coordinate things such as furniture delivery.

Andre shares what your support allows us to do best:
“The goal of The Ottawa Mission isn’t to just supply food and beds, it’s to give us hope for tomorrow.”

Thank you for making this possible!

CRAFTING A SENSE OF community — IN OUR — Hospice



The arts and crafts team pose proudly with their art

Give Today



We believe that **EVERYONE DESERVES A HOME**

Our new advocacy program
-Mission Possible-
addresses systemic factors that contribute to homelessness in our city through tools, resources, and calls to action.

Early successes include increases by the City of Ottawa and the provincial government for affordable housing in Ottawa.

...
learn more at:
ottawamission.com/advocacy

We’re so lucky to have compassionate donors who help us be *More Than A Shelter*. Our donors come in many shapes and forms — some donate once, others donate monthly. Some donate through a charitable gift in their will, and others donate through the valuable gift of their time.

Brigitte is one such amazing donor, who donates her time two days each week to help with our meal service and at our *Diane Morrison Hospice*. She started a particularly special Hospice activity that runs every other Tuesday: arts and crafts. **Showing as much ingenuity as compassion, Brigitte believed arts and crafts would be a great opportunity for our Hospice clients to express their creativity, socialize, and collaborate in a welcoming environment.** And was she ever right: arts and crafts is a hit!

Volunteerism was a tradition in Brigitte’s family growing up. She believes it’s a way to build community, which is especially important at The Ottawa Mission. She shares:

“Whether by staff, volunteers, or clients, I always feel welcome, valued, and respected. I volunteer at The Mission because I feel that I belong to something real: I am a part of someone’s worst day, and also a part of hope.”

Brigitte, thank you for your selflessness and bringing fresh, fun activities to our shelter!

CAIVAN presents



Blue Door
— GALA —

in partnership with *Infinity Cares Gala*

Thank you to all that attended our Blue Door Gala, in partnership with the Infinity Cares Gala, on November 9.

The event was a smashing success! We were pleased to once again host this amazing event in-person, and meet and mingle with all of our wonderful donors and sponsors. Guests were treated to the delicious offerings of our FSTP students and Chef Ric, all while supporting some meaningful causes.

...
We look forward to seeing you all at the Gala next year!



Give Today

Feeding those in need

ACROSS OTTAWA

Mary smiles with gratitude at our lunch service

Mary is a friendly, bright 76 year-old who relies on The Mission's community meal service. A lifelong Ottawa resident, Mary lives with her brother Robert in their parents' former home. She shares: ***"I am housed, but there are a lot of expenses that come with a home, and it can make you poor."***

Mary and her brother rely on Old Age Security and CPP benefit payments for their limited income, and once bills are paid, there is not a lot of money left over for groceries. Robert has disabilities and relies on his sister to get food. Mary faces some physical challenges herself: she recently had a colostomy and uses a walker to help with her mobility.

Despite this, Mary busses downtown to The Mission most weekdays for lunch, where she eats and then often picks up some food to-go for her brother from one of our Mobile Mission Meals food trucks. She enjoys chatting and checking in with staff and community guests while enjoying our lunch service. Mary knows just how important this community is for her.

"I'm very thankful for The Ottawa Mission and for the lovely, nutritious meals that they provide."

Your support helps ensure that Mary, her brother, and those who are the most vulnerable people in our community don't go hungry this holiday season. Thank you for your kindness.

Holiday meal for just \$4.68

You may have noticed that we've raised our per meal cost.

It's only because of generous supporters like you that we've been able to keep our meal cost so low for so long. As more and more people struggle under the weight of ever-increasing food prices and the soaring cost of living, they turn to The Mission for help.

But due to continuing high inflation, it's now become costlier for us too.

The good news is that, even with the increase, our per meal cost remains below the national average. And it's through the generosity of community partners and donors like you that we're able to make every dollar go as far as possible.

Your continued support means so much to us, and to the community we serve.

...

Your support will provide people like Mary with a delicious Christmas dinner on December 17.

Please give today.

**To make a donation,
visit ottawamission.com
or call 613.234.1155**

