

A COMMUNITY OF COMPASSION. A PLACE OF HOPE.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

CHRISTMAS 2022

Home. It's such a small word but it means so much. We talk about the housing crisis in Canadian cities, but housing needs to be more than just a roof, heat and a bed – we need to think about creating homes. Home is a place where you can go and know you will be free from violence. A home is a place of refuge, where you can recharge and reset. A home is where you can live without hiding parts of you. A home may be filled with people who are happy to see you when you walk in the door – or it may be a furry friend greeting you with a snuggle. A home may be where you find quiet. Or music. Or a place to paint, write, sing or dance.

Portland Place and the Adelaide Residence were built to give more than four walls to tenants – they are homes. Building projects like these are an example of what can be done when a group of people with a vision, commitment, and fearlessness come together. We are grateful that because of these visionaries decades ago, this Christmas season, over a 130 people have a place to call home.

– Ainsley Chapman
Executive Director





Sandy, Participant Volunteer

NAVIGATING THE ELECTION SEASON

Here at EHM, we are more than just giving everyone the basic needs. We also offer safe spaces to learn about important events effecting the community, such as upcoming elections. Everyone deserves to know their rights and to have a voice in important matters, and during these past Municipal elections, with the help from some of our participant volunteers, we worked to ensure our clients were aware of these rights. The voting process can be difficult to follow, especially if you have limited ways of getting information on the different candidates and their platforms, so our Drop In team ensured that they were available to answer any questions and make sure everyone was aware of their options. The drop in also handed out surveys to our clients, giving them the opportunity to voice their biggest concerns that they wanted the elected Mayor and councilors to take action on, showing them that their opinion is important and counted in this election.

We spoke with two of our participant volunteers, Sandy and Val, to hear about their involvement surrounding the activities around the Toronto Municipal Election and why they wanted to be involved. Sandy, who has been a client at EHM for 19 years, spoke on how she wanted to make sure there was more awareness surrounding individual rights and responsibilities and who is actually fighting for these rights. She wanted to be “better equipped to know the [candidates]” and having this information available in the Drop In made that possible.

Volunteering was a great experience for Sandy and gave her the opportunity to learn more about the different positions and responsibilities within the government in general and she hoped to get more people involved in the election. It also gave her an opportunity to socialize again, interact with other people after being isolated throughout the pandemic.

For Val, he wanted to help provide information to people who had difficulties understanding who the candidates were and to ensure they were able to get the answers they needed. This included translating the survey for someone who was interested in filling it out but was unable to understand it. He helped to ensure a language barrier wasn't going to stop this individual from voicing his opinions. He also wanted to give back and help the organization that has helped him, “[EHM] has given me things that I needed...I wanted to give back”. The most common issues that Sandy and Val heard primarily surrounded the overwhelming need for housing, benefits and basic human needs. By volunteering to help during the election, they were able to help give their peers the opportunity to voice these opinions.

While we were talking, Sandy and Val also spoke on how coming to EHM has helped them over the years. Sandy stated how “if it wasn't for evangel hall mission, I wouldn't be here today.” She has appreciated the various programs that EHM provides and the friendly staff that work here, “you come here and they make you feel at peace.” For Val, coming to EHM has helped with “getting [his] feet back on the ground... providing the needs.” They know that if they ever need help, Evangel Hall Mission is here for them.



SUPPORT SPOTLIGHT: MEET DEBBIE

At EHM we are lucky to have a great group of peer workers working here and using their personal experience to help the different clients who come through our doors. We were able to sit down with one of these workers, Debbie, who was able to tell us about her time working at EHM. Debbie came to us through a job training program and has been with EHM for a year now, and loves it here. Working at Evangel Hall has given her the opportunity and stability she needs to not only care for herself, but she is also now able to provide for her brother, who is in need of constant care. "It makes me happy I'm able to look after him."

Something that Debbie appreciates at EHM is the work EHM has put into making the Drop In a safe place – one of the reasons why the EHM Drop In attracts more women and seniors than other places in the community. Debbie also sees that the Drop In is a way for people on the streets to socialize, a place to gather with their friends, "I think they consider this part of their family."

As well as her great work in the Drop In, Debbie helps out with sorting through the various donations that are brought to us and is grateful for every single item that comes in because she knows that when people are in need, they can get it from EHM. "when donations come in, we get excited when we see a bag of soap!... If it wasn't for the donors, I don't think this place would survive without their help." EHM is grateful that they have been able to provide this opportunity to Debbie and are lucky to have her.

"Before ehm my life was pretty unstable, I didn't know if I was going to have to put my brother in a shelter, now [since working at EHM] I feel stable, I think my brother feels stable. It's given me stability"

Debbie



Debbie, Peer Worker



Ann-Marie, EHM Volunteer

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Looking for a way to get involved? We are now booking small groups of up to six people to cook a meal on Sunday afternoons for Portland Place tenants. Come cook and serve 45 meals to people in the Portland Place kitchen! If coming onsite is not an option, we are also inviting groups to drop off frozen casseroles and lasagnas that staff can serve. EHM can also sign on for your high school student's community service hours if they participate.

Spots are filling up, to book contact Janna at janna.spurr@evangelhall.ca or 416-504-3563 ext 223.

WINTER PRIORITY ITEMS

As we head into winter, we've got a new list of priority items needed to help clients get properly clothed for the Toronto cold.

ADULT CLOTHING ITEMS

- New underwear
- Sweatpants, pants and jeans
- Hoodies, warm sweaters, winter coats, shirts and blouses
- Running or sturdy shoes and winter boots
- Belts for jeans and pants

PERSONAL NECESSITIES

- Travel-sized shaving cream and shampoo
- Toothpaste and toothbrushes
- Hand/leg warmers
- Rub A535
- Incontinence products
- Sleeping bags and blankets
- Adult backpacks
- Bar soap

FOOD AND KITCHEN

- Tea bags
- Bottled Water
- Frozen vegetables – any kind
- Takeaway/individual packets of creamers/milk for coffee and tea
- Hot chocolate packets
- White rice
- Juice boxes
- Take-away snack items
- Prepared takeaway meals and sandwiches

To schedule your donation drop-off appointment, please call 416.504.3563 or email information@evangelhall.ca.

YOUR LEGACY OF CARE

Through a gift in your Will, you can make a tremendous impact on the future of the EHM community. Here are three steps to speaking with your financial advisor about your wishes:

- Open the conversation by sharing your intentions. Talk about why you would like to leave a gift in your Will to EHM and what kind of impact you want to have.
- Speak to your advisor about the best ways to make your gift. Some options, like a gift of securities or life insurance, might come with big tax savings.
- Discuss how you want your future gift to live on. Would you like to get your family involved?

Your decision to include EHM in your Will today will make such a difference for many years to come, thank you.

Please call Ainsley at 416.504.3562 x227 for more information.

**STAY CONNECTED.
WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

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ehm is proud to be a mission of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, under the care of the Presbytery of East Toronto. We have been providing services to those in need since 1913.

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