



2023 YOUR GRATITUDE REPORT

EASTER 2023

Human connection and hope. That's what your steadfast support provides to our community members. In the face of incredible challenges, you, our donors have shown your generosity, compassion, and care, time and time again. I can't thank you enough.

As you read this special gratitude report, I hope you feel pride at what we've accomplished together. From the merger with Portland Place, expansions in our Peer Employment and Spiritual Care programs, and strengthening of our meals and community programs, we've made a profound difference in the lives of our vulnerable and marginalized neighbours.

And what is next? While our community has moved out of the crisis phase of the pandemic, the truth is that we are – and will remain for some time – in a mental health crisis. As EHM looks ahead to the rest of 2023 and beyond, your generosity will ensure we can focus programs on re-building community and livelihoods fractured by the

challenges of these past years.

Aging is another priority concern here at EHM, with more and more older neighbours coming to us in search of food, showers, and other services. Many of our tenants are also aging, and declining physical and mental wellbeing make it difficult to clean their homes or even notice messes sometimes.

With your support, we are thoughtfully exploring how to meet the unique social, spiritual, and physical health needs of community members of all ages, including our seniors.

Thank you for continuing to stand with EHM. We are grateful to be your hands in the community.

Sincerely,



Ainsley Chapman,
Executive Director





LIVING PROOF OF POSSIBILITIES

PEER ROLE MODELS ARE LEADING THE WAY

When you walk through the doors of EHM's drop-in, one of the first faces you see is likely to be a Peer Worker.

Part of our rapidly-growing Spiritual Care Program, the Peer Worker Program employs individuals with personal, lived experience of being homeless. The job offers valuable paid work experience that is a vital step on the road to getting and maintaining housing.



Peer Workers help keep EHM's drop-in running – serving food, providing clients access to showers and laundry, and directing those who are unsure where to go. Peer Workers also help run programs like EHM's

women's group. Most importantly, they act as valuable peer role models.

There is an implicit foundation of trust between Peer Workers and current clients. People who are struggling are more likely to open up to someone who's "been there" than they are to a staff member. They know the sympathy they receive is

genuine, and that it comes from a place of true understanding. Because Peer Workers may feel more relatable and approachable, they are able to act as bridges for those who may otherwise be more reluctant in accessing EHM services.

Thanks to supporters like you, EHM has been able to expand on the success of our in-demand Peer Worker Program – growing from one Peer Worker to six. When participants don't think they can get out of the situation they are in, Peer Workers now have the uniquely powerful ability to say, "Yes, you can – because I did."

"I once had to worry about where my next meal would come from. Now, I have steady full-time employment through EHM's Peer Worker Program... and relationships that feel like family. The people here are truly some of the kindest you could ever hope to encounter."

Debbie
Peer Support Worker



CARING FOR THE WHOLE PERSON

PEER ROLE MODELS ARE LEADING THE WAY

“Clients are far more than people in need—they are individuals with unique stories and situations whose voices are worthy of being heard and who are deserving of love and compassion.”

Rev. Rebecca Jess,
EHM Vice-President

The COVID-19 pandemic was hard on all of us, and the clients and tenants EHM serves felt its impacts especially keenly. The stress, isolation, and grief of the pandemic compounded the daily stresses of homelessness and poverty so many were already experiencing.

Even at the height of the pandemic, on those dark days, your compassion has allowed EHM to offer one of our most critical services: the Spiritual Care Program.



As some of our most vulnerable community members experienced an onslaught of deaths and losses during COVID-19, they came to EHM looking for purpose, meaning, and human connection. One of the first things we did during social distancing was to set

up memorial services outdoors, honouring those we had lost.

Recognizing the urgent need for connection, your support helped EHM adapt our Spiritual Care Program activities to ensure they remained accessible and safe for all community members – even if that meant staying outside. As we move forward, we continue to prioritize both client safety and human connection.

Spiritual Care combines pastoral care with social services best practices to affirm the inherent worth



of the people we serve. Through one-on-one counselling, community dinners, weekly services, and more, you help ensure no one must feel alone in their struggles – or their successes.

Whether a client wants to celebrate a new milestone in their sobriety, needs advice about navigating a stressful family relationship, or is seeking a reminder of their purpose, the Spiritual Care is here to meet their unique needs.

Sometimes what we want most is simply a listening ear, a calming voice, and some supportive company. Your generosity helps EHM provide just that. Together, we are offering people hope, and reminding our neighbours just how special, important and loved they are!



A MERGER TO MAXIMIZE GOOD

HOW YOU'RE HELPING TWO ORGANIZATIONS MOVE FORWARD AS ONE

With the overwhelming support of tenants and staff, the EHM and Portland Place leadership teams made the bold decision to merge in January 2022. Now, these two locations (comprising 130 apartments) have come together under one umbrella to provide hope and dignity for more community members.

A bigger, more integrated team ensures more staff and volunteers are on site at Portland Place to provide support and resources. This is particularly important as many tenants are aging and experiencing a rapid decline of both mental and physical health.

EHM is now able to work directly with care teams and families to advocate for more supports from community agencies, and ensure they are prioritized on waitlists for long-term care and other housing with more intensive medical and mental health supports.

More staff at Portland Place also means we can now also plan and deliver vibrant group activities like crafts and mindfulness workshops on-site for tenants. The coffee is hot, and all are welcome!

"The need [for affordable housing] is crucial and immediate and can make the difference for someone living in poverty to function and even survive."

*Rev. Bob Smith,
EHM Board member*

We're also helping tenants at both sites stay safely housed. EHM's Tenancy Preservation Worker is able to visit and speak with tenants who are struggling to care for themselves or their home. These meetings allow us to find out what may be interfering with someone's ability to maintain a clean apartment and then connect them to relevant community resources.

This merger creates much-needed cost-savings when it comes to the maintenance and administration of the two buildings. Critical repairs will be able to happen much more quickly, preserving critical housing stock and preventing more people from becoming unhoused.

THANK YOU. YOUR SUPPORT IS PROVIDING MORE OF OUR NEIGHBOURS WITH THE HOPE AND DIGNITY WE ALL DESERVE.

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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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