



Christmas Out of the Cold

How your kindness saved Josephine's Christmas and changed her life

Josephine and her children arrived at Inasmuch House in November of 2024, escaping abuse that spanned two continents.

I remember that bitterly cold evening in late November. Huddled together with my children outside of a shelter, trying desperately to use our body heat for warmth. We had been out there for hours, and there didn't seem to be an end in sight.

I hadn't experienced many winters in Canada, so I didn't know how to dress appropriately for the weather. One of my daughters pressed her face up against the glass, turned to me and asked me a heartbreaking question:

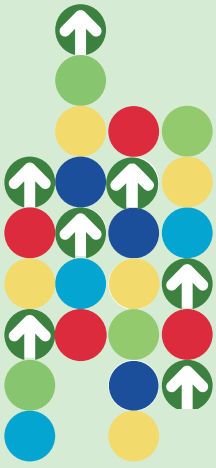
"Mommy, why can't we go in there and get warm?"

I didn't know how to answer her as I moved my nearly frozen fingers to press the keypad on my phone.

"*Maybe this one will have room for us,*" I thought to myself as I called the next shelter on my list.

Another rejection.

"Why do you tell people that there is hope out there?" I said angrily into the phone. "Do you expect us to just go back to the person that we are escaping from?"



Act Justly. Show Compassion. Offer Hope.

Mission Services of Hamilton is located on the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Mississaugas.

MISSION

Restoring hope and empowering people to find their way forward.

VISION

We envision a resilient and healthy community that is compassionate, equitable and hopeful.

VALUES

We are dedicated to and guided by these core values:

- Dignity
- Innovation
- Compassion
- Excellence

Deep down, I knew it wasn't their fault. They only had so many beds to go around, but at this point, I was so close to giving up. I knew that I had to go on for my children, but the lack of support from friends and family since I left my abusive husband was wearing on me.

I dialled another shelter, this one for women and children escaping violence: Inasmuch House.

By some miracle, they picked up. They didn't have much space, they told me. We could go sit in their small waiting room in hopes that a room would open up. That small room might as well have been a palace in that moment. It was safe, it was dry, and it was warm.

A room opened up a short while later, and we were able to settle in at Inasmuch House.

Having escaped with only the clothes that we were wearing and could carry, we didn't have much, but with Christmas around the corner, we were safe and warm, and that's all that mattered.

My children have such pleasant memories from the Christmas that we had at Inasmuch House. Because of people's donations, we were able to get new clothes and the children got to pick out some new toys. It was the best time of our lives here in Canada. For me, it was the first time that I was able to truly experience the peace that you hear so much about at Christmas.

I still remember my 11-year-old pulling me aside one night to ask me a question.

"Mom, can we stay at Inasmuch House forever?"

This time, I knew the answer.

"No, honey, but soon we will be moving to a new place. A place we can call our own."

We just moved into subsidized housing. The workers at Inasmuch House helped us in so many ways to make it possible.

They helped me sort out my taxes so that I could receive my child benefits, connected me with my housing opportunity, and introduced me to some courses to make myself more hireable.



Josephine is pictured in the waiting room at Inasmuch House, where she and her children first warmed up.

Inasmuch House

A shelter specifically for women and children escaping domestic violence, Inasmuch House has 40 beds and offers families a space of peace, hope, and healing during difficult times.



It's a big transition, much like coming to Inasmuch House was in the first place, but this time, I know I have support.

Inasmuch House helped turn my story of fear into one of freedom. I feel like I'm finally able to restart my life, and I'm grateful for every opportunity I received from there.

I'm so glad that Inasmuch House could be there for us when my kids and I needed it the most. Thank you for your kindness in supporting this life-changing place. 🌱

-As told to Glen Cuthbert

This Christmas Season, help and hope are yours to give...

Donate Today

mission-services.com/donate

for just
\$4.15

HOPE
served here

Scan here to donate!





How You're Making the Holidays More Hopeful

Your support makes a difference during the Christmas season!

As the weather turns colder and thoughts turn to Christmas, your generosity is already at work across every Mission Services' program.

Your donations are helping to bring warmth, comfort and hope to those who need it most during the holiday season.

On a table in the office of Jim, Assistant Director of Food Services, is an assortment of holiday treats that will be available for every individual and family who visits our **Good Food Centre** in the month of December.

"Throughout the year, we provide a variety of necessities, focusing on fresh produce and essentials."

"We want this time of year to feel special for people, so we've put together an assortment of treats and fun foods for people to take home along with their regular groceries."

"They can share them at family gatherings and have a special treat to share with their loved ones as they celebrate.

Willow's Place and **Emma's Place** will be holding various holiday-themed group activities leading up to Christmas, culminating with a special dinner and a gift for everyone who attends. From craft groups to sing-alongs, it will be a time of celebration for staff and residents alike!

The 196 Program will hold their annual family Christmas party when school lets out for the

break, with parents and siblings attending as well. It gives the kids an opportunity to celebrate the holidays with their friends, as well as introduce their families to the staff and other students.

Each of the students in the program will receive presents and care packages made possible through generous donations made to our Sponsor-a-Family program.

The staff at **Inasmuch House** are working to make this Christmas season a time of unity and togetherness for the residents there, many of whom will be experiencing their first Christmas away from family and friends.

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Your Gifts at Work 2025 to Date



105,683

**MEALS
SERVED**



14,493

**HOUSEHOLDS
ACCESSING
GROCERY
ASSISTANCE**



18,299

**WILLOW'S
PLACE
VISITS**



47,469

**OVERNIGHT
SHELTER
STAYS**



1,265

**ADDICTION
SERVICES
INTERACTIONS**

“The holidays can feel isolating for many, so we want to create an environment where residents can share time together through activities, laughter, and mutual understanding of each other’s circumstances,” said Sharan, Manager of Shelter Logistics at Inasmuch House.

“When people can come together, without judgement, we create a space where families can connect and build new, meaningful memories and relationships.”

Clients at our **Men’s Shelter** will enjoy a turkey dinner with all the trimmings at Christmas, and will also receive winter hats and warm clothing to ensure that they are protected from the cold weather.

The holidays can be a difficult time for people struggling with addiction, so our **Addiction Services** department will be offering additional virtual meetings in the week leading up to Christmas (December 22-24), ensuring clients are able to receive the support that they need.



During the holiday season, we will serve nearly 19,000 meals and help over 8,000 people with grocery assistance.

Your support ensures that no one is left in the cold. Share the Christmas spirit of generosity and give hope by visiting mission-services.com or by calling 905-528-4211 ext. 3113



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