



# GOODSHEPHERD JOURNAL

SPRING 2022

GOODSHEPHERD.CA

NUMBER 55



**“Imagine you came to a city, and you don’t have a place to sleep, and you don’t have food to eat. Then you find a place where people respect you and take care of you.”**

**Eltyeb Elmukashfi, helped by your support of Good Shepherd’s Resettlement/Housing Program**

Sudan in early 2019 was a frightening place to live. War, demonstrations, and uprisings were threatening the lives of its citizens. People were being massacred in the streets. If you did not support the regime, your life was in danger.

Eltyeb Elmukashfi was living in Sudan. He was the son of a respected religious leader in the community. He had a great education – a degree in accounting and a master’s degree in business administration. He had a house, a job, and a family.

But Eltyeb did not support the regime in Sudan. He lived in fear. The company where he worked did not promote him. Providing for his pregnant wife and three small children got more difficult.

**Read on to find out how your support helped Eltyeb and his young family leave the violence of Sudan to find a better life in Canada...**

GOODSHEPHERD.CA

Eltyeb faced a tough decision: stay in Sudan and continue living in fear or escape the country in hopes of a better life. In 2019, Eltyeb chose to leave everything behind, fleeing first to the United States, then to Canada.

He found himself alone in Montreal with \$392 in his pocket, looking for refugee status. He spoke some English, but no French. Overwhelmed by the language barrier, he headed to Toronto.

In Toronto, he found Good Shepherd Ministries. After so much uncertainty and fear, his relief was intense.

“Imagine you came to a city and you don’t have a place to sleep, and you don’t have food to eat. Then you find a place where people respect you and take care of you.” That was Eltyeb’s experience at Good Shepherd Ministries, where he stayed in the shelter and received support from Good Shepherd’s Resettlement/Housing Program.

As soon as he could, Eltyeb began working and sending every dollar that he made back home to his wife and children.

“No one’s going to help them,” he said. “They have no food, no gas, no electricity, and there’s war and uprising.”

Eltyeb worried non-stop about his family. He worked at a local convenience store doing overnight shifts. Twice during the 11 months he worked there he was held up and robbed. Once, the robber had a knife; the second time, the robber had a concealed gun. After that, Eltyeb quit. But he kept working at other jobs, doing whatever he could so his family back in Sudan could survive.

Eltyeb got his refugee status, then worked hard to get permanent status so he could bring his family to the safety of Canada.

Then, in November of 2021, it happened: Eltyeb went to the airport to meet his family.

“It was very emotional, we were crying, my three children were jumping all over me, and there’s my new baby, now two years old, that I had never met.”

Eltyeb and his family now live in a one-bedroom apartment in Scarborough. Though small, it’s a first step. His children are registered for school. He and his wife take English classes together, even though Eltyeb’s English is good. He hopes to work in accounting again and he wants to be more confident.

“My goal is to give my children the best education possible, so they can have great opportunities and a great future. Thank you for helping that to happen.”

## Good Shepherd’s Resettlement/Housing Program

### How your gifts help refugees & others seeking homes

In the past three years, the housing workers in the Resettlement/Housing Program at Good Shepherd Ministries have helped 136 homeless refugees.

Eltyeb received guidance from his Housing Worker on how to search for and fill out applications for housing. He was referred to legal aid and immigration supports so he could successfully navigate the complexities of the immigration system and bring his family to safety.

His housing worker also helped him prepare a resume and cover letter, showed him job websites, and helped him prepare for job interviews. Once he found work, his housing worker connected him with a tax clinic!

Your support helps make three housing workers (reduced from five due to the pandemic) available to help homeless individuals rebuild their lives. Thank you for giving people the gift of a safe home!



BROTHER DAVID

## Moving forward with faith and hope

“In a time of destruction, create something: a poem, a parade, a community, a school, a vow, a moral principle; one peaceful moment.”

Maxine Hong Kingston

Human suffering can seem overwhelming right now. Violence, disease, voices raging in hate — and all that misery combined with the long, dark cold of winter. When will it end?

I don't know when it will end — the pandemic, the war, or the crisis of homelessness in our community. But I have faith.

Faith says, “Yes, I will get up out of bed and face the day even when the news makes me weep. I will do what I can to create a better world by sharing food and love, listening with attention, offering respect and kindness.”

Together, you and I are — as the quote by Maxine says — creating something in a time of destruction. Your gifts are helping sustain a house of hospitality, a place of welcome and peace.

Together, you and I are extending a helping hand to refugees like Eltyeb as they flee from violence.

Together, you and I are giving shelter and support to homeless men like John, whose ongoing struggle with addictions reflects the painful legacy of a childhood filled with violence.

Faith gives us the strength to act with compassion and acceptance in a world where such actions seem doomed to failure. Faith helps us continue to offer hospitality and love — regardless of how that turns out.

Thank you for helping to bring the “light that the darkness cannot overcome” to people who struggle with poverty and homelessness.

Together, in a world filled with suffering and violence, we will keep alive the joy of the Resurrection, of new life. Alleluia!

## COMMUNITY UPDATE



Br. Yvon Paquin, OH, joined the Pastoral Care team in October 2021.

The newest member of the Pastoral Care team, Br. Yvon, jokingly says that he joined the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God at age 12.

That was when he began attending a Montreal high school run by the Hospitaller Order. He joined the novitiate when he graduated, and then trained as a nurse.

After a lifetime of service as a nurse and chaplain in Quebec (he is ordained as a priest), Br. Yvon retired to work in Ontario.

He worked first at Emmanuel House Hospice in Hamilton,

then moved to Good Shepherd in Toronto last fall.

From June 13 to 19, the Brothers will be holding their Provincial Chapter on the theme Go Forth with Passion to Promote Hospitality. At the Chapter, the Provincial Superior and Council will be elected.

The Province of the Good Shepherd in North America is part of an international St. John of God family of 500,000 coworkers, working in 500 centres of care in 52 countries, affecting more than 7 million lives every year.

For more info please visit: [www.sjog-na.org](http://www.sjog-na.org)

## Heroism and hope by Christine Slater, Manager, Pastoral Care

Even when required to “stay-at-home”, our community stepped up to care for those who don’t have a home



Christine Slater helps pack sandwiches for the meals-to-go served to the homeless.

After more than two years of profound upheaval, we now seem to be entering a reversion to normalcy.

None of us was unaffected by COVID-19: even if we were fortunate enough to have avoided getting the virus, we faced the dismal reality of lockdowns, physical distancing and our lives, by necessity, becoming smaller.

At Good Shepherd Ministries, we felt the effects right away. We closed our dining room to the public in mid-March 2020. We moved half the shelter guests to a nearby hotel to allow for more space in the dorm. Most co-workers assumed different duties.

Still, every single day of this pandemic, we managed to feed and support the most vulnerable in our community. This was no mean feat, and we learned and adapted as we went along.

Throughout, while not being able to rely on our army of volunteers, we were blessed with heroes donating items from businesses that had to shut down, people making thousands of sandwiches, bakeries dropping off bread. It was, in its own way, a wonderful affirmation of community in a difficult time.

Now, perhaps seeing the back of COVID-19, the bad news doesn’t seem to stop. And the marginalized and needy in Toronto have not gone away.

As we ponder the best ways in which to re-open at full capacity, we are more than aware of the many needs in our world, which can be quite overwhelming and discouraging.

While we may not be able to solve a global crisis, or take in every refugee, we are certainly buoyed by the continued generosity of old, and new, donors, and for the many creative ways we managed to serve during the pandemic.

Good Shepherd’s experience shows that, even when faced with unexpected challenges and restrictions, people step up to help in their own backyards. When individual lives seemed endlessly confined to “home,” people didn’t forget those without one. It was an encouraging symbol of compassion and solidarity, and helped us, and those we serve, during a very tough time.

The bad news isn’t going anywhere. Heroism and hope isn’t either.

### Barrett House and St. Joseph’s Residence

## Your support helps provide affordable assisted living



Michael (left), a frail senior with a history of homelessness, spent this past winter living in the warmth and safety of St. Joseph’s Residence.

But Bernard, a 74-year-old man with impaired cognition and multiple physical health problems, was not so lucky. He

froze to death in a downtown bus shelter.

As the housing crisis in Canada deepens, a growing number of older adults face homelessness for the first time in their lives. Others with chronic health problems, like the six people with HIV & AIDS who live at Barrett House, find it impossible to afford the housing and care they need to live with security and dignity.

Thank you for helping Good Shepherd to give people in need a safe place to live — no-one should die on the streets!

## Volunteering throughout the pandemic



Before COVID: Tom Ducharme volunteering with daughter Erin

It was about 10 years ago that I started thinking about doing some volunteer work. My kids were both in university and they no longer needed my time, just my money!

My wife (Sharon) had just completed a half-day volunteer session with her company at the Good Shepherd. She told me about her experience, and I became curious.

I was working downtown, and I decided to volunteer Friday mornings assisting in the kitchen. The rest is history!

I love volunteering at the Good Shepherd. It truly helps me justify my existence, especially

since I retired four years ago. I've been very fortunate to live a good life and I believe it is important to give back to your community and help those who are less fortunate.

As part of the kitchen crew, I have come to appreciate how hard the full-time employees work, preparing delicious and nutritious meals for our community's homeless as well as the Good Shepherd staff.

I chose to continue volunteering throughout the COVID pandemic (except when mandated by the Government) because I knew the Good Shepherd was still supporting the community and the full-time staff needed assistance. It also provided me with some normalcy during this period of uncertainty.

I have worked with many people (full-time staff and volunteers) over the past 10 years. The full-time staff have become like family to me. We work hard but we also like to have fun while we work.

In summary, I am forever grateful to my wife for introducing me to the Good Shepherd. She knows that I love the volunteering opportunity, but she also knows that I love staying for lunch - a nice reward at the end of a shift...



During COVID: Tom Ducharme helping the kitchen prepare casseroles for the hot portion of the meals-to-go. Your support helped Good Shepherd keep this essential service going despite pandemic restrictions.

The pandemic has cut the number of on-site volunteers at Good Shepherd to five triple-vaccinated volunteers daily — a painful change from 30 to 50 volunteers or more every day!

Since Public Health puts homeless shelters in the same category as long-term care homes, Good Shepherd will continue to follow full pandemic guidelines even as these measures are lifted in other sectors of our community. We're hoping that things will improve, and we can welcome back all our wonderful volunteers and develop friendships with some new ones!

**Compassion never goes on vacation!** Join the compassionate crew of monthly donors who give year-round. For more info, please contact Cindy at 416.869.3619 x 277 or [cindy@goodshepherd.ca](mailto:cindy@goodshepherd.ca).

**There's no better legacy than a legacy of kindness.** Please remember our homeless brothers and sisters and the work of Good Shepherd Ministries when making your will.

# Creative support for homeless and at-risk Veterans

by Marla Newman, Veterans Housing Navigation, and Ryan Graham, Helmets to Hardhats



Your donations help Marla Newman & Ryan Graham reach out to support homeless and at-risk Veterans

This has been an extremely stressful time for all our Veterans especially for those who are homeless and those living alone in their apartments. For that reason, we have continued to take referrals and do our best to provide the needed support to assist them with the necessities they require.

As the pandemic dragged on, many of the Veterans we work with reported feeling isolated and lonely. There was nothing to fill their time as most of their supports/groups were put on hold.

As a result, we began doing intensive telephone outreach providing weekly phone calls to those Veterans who did not feel comfortable meeting in person. This allowed us to check in on both their physical and mental health needs.

Another challenge was that some of our clients do not own cell phones limiting their ability to communicate. Many clients have reached out to us and are receiving support from the shelter where they are staying. We also made reach-out calls to many previous clients who are more vulnerable. For example, we reached out to a 94-year-old Veteran who is living in Legion Homes to ensure arrangements were made to have someone do his grocery shopping and check in on him as he self isolates. We also delivered food boxes to a client in VAC housing who is in a wheelchair and was having difficulty shopping. We later arranged to have other tenants in the building check in on a weekly basis for support.

One of our biggest priorities is continuing to provide support with housing needs. Several applications to VAC housing, Legion Homes, and subsidized housing were completed. Housing searches are still being done on the Internet and potential listings are emailed or texted to Veterans. So far, we have been able to house 12 Veterans in various housing units. In each instance, intense support was provided to help the Veteran navigate the application process, secure first and last months rent and plan the move in process. This includes contacting Ontario Works/Ontario Disability Support Program,

Veterans Affairs Canada and The Royal Canadian Legion for financial support.

The enduring strength of our community is more evident than ever during this challenging time. The pandemic has called on us to be adaptable and creative in the way we deliver services to our clients and the community. We have taken an all-hands-on-deck approach to continue the essential operations so important to the values that we share at Good Shepherd.

## **How a partnership with Helmets to Hardhats helps homeless and at-risk Veterans find employment**

Helmets to Hardhats (H2H) started in 2012 and is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping Veterans transition from military to civilian life by securing well-paying jobs in the construction and building industry.

Good Shepherd Ministries has been working in collaboration with H2H to find Veterans jobs. With restrictions easing, we are setting up presentations to get the word out to shelters and other organizations about the program. The restrictions that were in place due to Covid-19 severely affected our operation but now we are hopeful that we will be able to reach more homeless and at-risk Veterans and help them secure a second career.

## “This place is a blessing”

How your donations helped John McCann “have a life again”



John with Christine & Sister Joan of the Pastoral Care team, helping to sort sandwiches for the meals-to-go program. Your donations give homeless men like John a chance to gain insights that will help them stay in recovery.

Five-year-old John McCann was proud to be running an errand for his mother.

He walked all the way to Canadian Tire. He used the money his mom had given him to buy the baseball bat she had asked him to buy. He found his way back without getting lost, and he gave the bat to his mother.

“Good,” she said, as she smacked her palm with the bat. “I can hit the s.o.b.’s head with this.”

Even now, at age 59, John remembers the shame and horror his five-year-old self felt at his mother’s words. She was going to kill his dad – and it was his fault!

That day, John watched helplessly as his alcoholic mom attacked his violently abusive stepfather with the bat John had bought for her. Everyone survived – but for John, that event became just one of many searingly painful childhood memories.

John became the alcoholic, the drug addict. He was desperate to numb the pain of feeling lost, worthless, unwanted by the people he loved.

He tried to fight the addictions. He had periods of sobriety. He ran a successful furniture store. He married and had children. And he relapsed.

Last year, John was living in a sober house in Oshawa, trying to stay sober. He could not. He lost his sobriety, and he lost his housing.

John desperately wanted something better than addiction and homelessness. He went to a detox, from there to a crisis house, and from there to the DARE Program at Good Shepherd Ministries.

“I’ve been here three months now. This time, I’m admitting that my life is out of control, that the kind of life that was normal for me is NOT normal. What I was taught as a child is NOT normal. DARE is teaching me to live life in a way that’s life sustaining.”

“DARE is a place where I’m given the chance, with God’s grace, to have a life again. I’m grateful, so grateful. Every morning, I get up and pray. I say thank you to God for my sobriety. I ask him to keep my children safe. Then I try to live my whole day acting on my spiritual life.”

“Why didn’t I understand before this that my thinking was crazy thinking? Why didn’t I hand it over to God before? I don’t know.

Being here gives me a chance to understand where I’m going. This place is a blessing.”

# “Small things with great love”

HERE'S WHAT YOU HELPED MAKE HAPPEN IN 2021



### Meals Served

228,524 meals were served to people who would otherwise have gone hungry

### Basic Needs

36,500+ hygiene essentials & items of clothing were distributed



### People Sheltered

762 homeless men found a safe place to stay at Good Shepherd Centre & the hotel managed by Good Shepherd



### Housing

57 homeless men found housing with help from Good Shepherd & 14 individuals continued to live with 24-hour supportive care at Barrett House & St. Joseph's Residence

### Help With Addictions

268 homeless men seeking recovery from addictions received support from the Drug & Alcohol Recovery Enrichment (DARE) Program



### Homeless & At-Risk Veterans

11 homeless & at-risk Veterans received one-on-one support & 10 homeless Veterans found housing

HOSPITALITY ♥ COMPASSION ♥ ACCEPTANCE ♥ FAITH

### Dorm Supplies

Razors (disposable)  
Toothpaste  
Toothbrushes  
Deodorant  
Shaving cream  
Soap  
Body lotion  
Shampoo

### Food

Granola bars & other single-serving packaged snacks  
Cereal  
Canned stews/soups

### Dare program

Blank notebooks

# WISH LIST

## DONORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Thank you to the following organizations:

Charmaine Sweets  
Congregation of Notre Dame Visitation Province  
First Church of Christ, Scientist  
J.S. Cheng & Partners Inc.  
Ling Search Partners  
Mary Ferraro Foundation  
Mary J. Rosseel Farms Inc.  
Pastel Labs Inc.  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto  
Voyzant Inc.

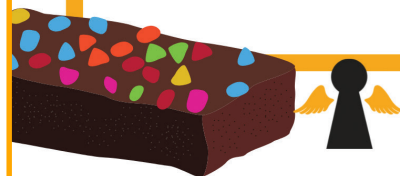
Perfect for student volunteers!

Good Shepherd Meals-to-Go

## BAKE 4 GOOD

bake for the homeless in your home

- ♥ Sign up by e-mailing [volunteer@goodshepherd.ca](mailto:volunteer@goodshepherd.ca).
- ♥ Bake sweet treats to pack in Good Shepherd's Meals-to-Go for homeless & hungry people.
- ♥ Deliver your packaged treats to 412 Queen St. East and feel the warmth that comes from bringing comfort to someone in need.
- ♥ If you wish, e-mail us a picture of your sweet treats or your delivery to Good Shepherd, and we'll post it to Good Shepherd's social media!



GOODSHEPHERD.CA

Founded in 1963, Good Shepherd Ministries is a registered charity and a mission of the



Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God  
Province of the Good Shepherd in North America

[www.goodshepherd.ca](http://www.goodshepherd.ca)

[twitter.com/goodshepherd\\_TO](https://twitter.com/goodshepherd_TO)

[facebook.com/goodshepherd\\_TO](https://facebook.com/goodshepherd_TO)

[youtube.com/user/GoodShepherdToronto](https://youtube.com/user/GoodShepherdToronto)

412 Queen Street East, Toronto, ON, M5A 1T3

[info@goodshepherd.ca](mailto:info@goodshepherd.ca)

416.869.3619, ext. 223

# Charitable Registration No. 89250 8169 RR0001