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I owe my life to the Good Shepherd for giving me the opportunity to better myself and to get my life back on track.

Justin Hillyer



My name is Justin Hillyer. I am 31 years old. I have been addicted to methamphetamine and other substances for about 10 years. This is my story.

I was born in Guelph, Ontario but was raised in Toronto and a few other places. I was made a crown ward at the age of 3 and I was bounced around the system until I was 18. I can't remember the number of group homes and foster homes I was in. Way too many to count. I was dealt a crappy hand, but I was determined to make the best of it.

Read on to find out how you helped Justin regain his life and reconnect with family...

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I advocated for my brother and sister whenever I thought they were being dealt with unfairly. I think the first time this happened was when I was 10. I felt I had to take care of them because my mom couldn't. I was determined to do this, so I did well in school. Flew through high school and graduated and was on my way to college.

The summer I graduated was when I had my first beer. I loved the way it made me feel. A few months later I tried smoking pot. I lived on campus in a dry building which meant no alcohol but that didn't stop me. I would throw parties every weekend. I was living the dream...so I thought. I would wake up and start drinking. I would fill up a McDonald's cup with booze and go to my classes. This went on for a couple of months and eventually I stopped going to class. I ended up getting kicked off campus and had to drop out of my classes. My second year of college I lived off campus, but the partying just got worse. I told myself that it was normal. That I was living college life and it was no big deal. I just did two years of college.

I moved to Wasaga Beach to live with my mom. I started working and worked my way up to Manager [at a restaurant]. I was still partying but not as much. Since I never actually knew my mom because I lived in foster care my whole life, I would come to find out she was a heavy drug user. My mother was more of a friend than a mother and we partied together. I started doing MDMA [methamphetamine] with her and that led to crack/cocaine.

A few months later my stepdad who was my whole world passed away from an overdose. That's when I went super downhill. I quit my job and started using full time. I got into trouble and got arrested. Because I was using, I was paranoid and didn't go to court. Instead I bought a one way ticket to Vancouver.

When I moved to Vancouver that was my first time homeless. I was homeless on East Hastings, one of the worst places in Canada. I was homeless for 9 months then I started a junk removal company with a friend. Life was good again. After 2 years, I lost everything. I

turned back to drugs and moved back to Ontario with my real dad in Guelph.

In 2021 my father passed away due to drinking. I spun out of control. I overdosed a few times. I was dead for 8 minutes once but I came back. But that didn't stop me using. I ended up in jail. When I got out, I started using again. Right away I went into a psychosis. It was the scariest thing I have ever been through. I thought the whole world was plotting against me. All my friends, my family, everyone. I couldn't take it so I came to Toronto.

My psychosis got worse. I lasted 12 hours on the street before I went to the emergency room and from there to CAMH [Centre for Addiction and Mental Health]. I spent 3 weeks there. I had nowhere to go and didn't want to use again. That's when I was told about the DARE [Drug and Alcohol Recovery Enrichment] program at Good Shepherd.

I was excited but also nervous. I didn't know what to expect. When I arrived [at Good Shepherd] I was so grateful I still had my freedom. If I was struggling there was always somebody to talk to and help me through the rough times. I went to treatment and I am now 9 months clean. I have reconnected with my younger sister and my niece and nephew. I walked my sister down the aisle at her wedding and am now a big part of my niece and nephew's lives, which makes the urge to stay sober that much stronger. I am now looking for work and housing for September. I owe my life to the Good Shepherd for giving me the opportunity to better myself and to get my life back on track.

In the first 6 months of 2024 the DARE program successfully achieved the following:

- 109 individuals admitted to pre treatment
- 41 individuals entered residential treatment
- 12 people admitted to the post treatment phase
- 14 clients secured housing

SHARING OUR BLESSINGS

Gathering together to give thanks and offer hope and dignity



As we gather in the spirit of Thanksgiving, I am reminded of the words, "There but for the grace of God go I."

So many of us are lucky to have family and friends to share a meal and celebrate with, while others are homeless, isolated from family, and need our support. But as I reflect, I also think about the help that we have provided to support and meet the needs of those who come to Good Shepherd seeking help. I also think about YOU!

YOU, our benefactors, funders, co-workers and volunteers, have made it possible for Good Shepherd to provide vital services to the homeless and marginalized in our community. As you read this newsletter, take comfort in the knowledge that your contributions have made a profound impact, offering

hope and dignity to those in need. As in Matthew 25:40, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

It is by His grace that we are here today, and we give thanks for His abundant blessings. It is a time for us to share with others and I extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your faith and generosity. Your support inspires us to continue our mission and to serve others with love and compassion.

May we all continue to be blessed and offer care and hope to those around us.

Akililu Wendaferew, MSW, RSW
Executive Director



BARRETT HOUSE & ST. JOSEPH'S RESIDENCE UPDATE

Barrett House and St. Joseph's Residence, nestled within the Good Shepherd Ministries, cater to the needs of individuals who are living with HIV and seniors who have a history of homelessness and require assisted living services.

Compassionate co-workers at these supportive housing residences recognize the significance of incorporating meaningful activities and fostering social interactions for residents. To enrich their lives, weekly outings to various locations across the city are organized.

One memorable excursion entailed a visit to the cinema, where residents enjoyed watching a movie together, while fostering friendships. Another outing brought them to the vibrant distillery district, immersing them in a world of history and bustling energy, offering them a bit of adventure within the city.



Over the summer, Ashbridge Bay emerged as a cherished spot for the group, offering moments of tranquility by the waterfront, as they enjoyed the fresh air while taking in all the activity of people

having a day at the beach. There were also numerous trips to the mall engaging in window shopping, sharing a meal, and feeling connected to the hustle and bustle of urban life.

The group participated in a weekly art program, allowing residents to express themselves artistically and explore their talents – a very therapeutic activity. These outings not only infused residents' lives with joy and excitement, but also instilled a deep sense of community and belonging. Good Shepherd understands the profound impact of these activities and are committed to ensuring that residents continue to engage their spirit as well as their minds to enhance their lives.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Real Food for Real Kids

Good Shepherd's meal program serves 900 plus meals each day. That requires a lot of donated food products from a variety of sources – individuals, business and those in the food industry. Good Shepherd is blessed to have so many supporters who help provide nutritious meals and snacks to people who are struggling with homelessness and poverty. One such partner is Real Food for Real Kids (RFRK).

If you have children or grandchildren, nieces and nephews, you may be aware of RFRK. What started as one mom's mission to ensure her young child was eating well at childcare, has since turned into a leading catering company that provides healthy food options for childcare centres, schools, and camps. They serve snacks and meals to an average of 50,000 children throughout the GTA and Hamilton every day.

Our partnership has been going strong since 2017, when Real Food for Real Kids approached Good Shepherd with the idea of providing produce to support the meal program. The benefits were two-fold, people who needed healthy food would receive it and perfectly fine food would not end up being thrown away. In a city where 24% of households

experience food insecurity* participating in RFRK food recovery program made sense.

“Since 2004, our mission has always been to enable & inspire a lifetime of healthy eating. We believe that everyone deserves access to nutritious food, regardless of age or socio-economic status. Our partnership with Good Shepherd allows us to help members of the community we don't usually connect with through our childcare & school services. We're so grateful to have this opportunity to help nourish folks who need it and ensure perfectly good food doesn't go to waste”, said Lan Tran, Marketing & Communications Manager.

With their partnership in food recovery, Good Shepherd is better able to provide more nutritional options for those who attend our meal program.

**If you would like to partner with Good Shepherd, please contact us at
416-869-3619 ext. 277
donations@goodshepherd.ca**

*<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/long-term-vision-plans-and-strategies/poverty-reduction-strategy/food-security-in-toronto-poverty-reduction-strategy>

ST. JOHN OF GOD COMMUNITY UPDATE



Br. Ignace Nabede

our mission and services.

Born in Togo, Brother Ignace embarked on his vocation with the Hospitaller Order on August 15, 2003. His commitment to this vocation was marked by his first profession of vows on August 15, 2005, followed by his Solemn profession vows on December 12, 2012. Over the years, he has dedicated himself to the service of others with a deep sense of mission

Brother Ignace's academic journey is equally impressive. He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Social Work from Lomé University in Togo, where he studied from 2005 to 2009. This academic foundation has greatly informed and enhanced his approach to his work within the Hospitaller Order.

The Hospitaller Order of St. John of God – Province of the Good Shepherd in North American welcomed Br. Joseph Smith from the General Curia in Rome



Br. Joseph Smith tours Good Shepherd Ministries and meets with co-workers to discuss programs and services.

We are delighted to announce the arrival of Brother Ignace Nabede, who has recently joined our Hospitaller family in Toronto. Brother Ignace brings with him a wealth of experience and dedication that will undoubtedly enrich

in May. Br. Joseph conducted a Canonical Visitation which is a routine visitation carried out by a higher authority to ensure that the community is adhering to the Constitutions of the Order. This visitation involves a review of the community's spiritual, administrative, and financial activities. It also included site visits to the various programs at Good Shepherd in Toronto to meet co-workers and was capped off with a bbq.



Canonical visit ends with a outdoor barbeque with co-workers and residents.

The Community has also been very busy with the Provincial Assembly which took place in Darien, Illinois from June 13-23. The theme was 'Celebrating Hospitality in a Changing World.' Preparing for a changing world and the many opportunities and hardships that the community may face in serving the needs of marginalized populations is front of mind as the Order prepares for their General Chapter in Czestochowa, Poland in October.

The General Chapter is a major event involving Brothers and co-worker representatives from different Provinces of the Order. It involves discussions on key topics, decision-making and election of leaders. It is an opportunity to review progress and future direction of the Order and may include topics such as mission, response to global challenges and community life.



Brothers convene in Darien for Provincial Assembly

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Learning to serve and serving to learn

For the months of June and July, Good Shepherd was happy to host four students from Notre Dame University. This is the second year we have partnered with the NDBridge program which focuses on understanding the challenges marginalized communities face. Its purpose is for students to develop an awareness of social justice, examine how systemic injustice is created and perpetuated, and to contemplate the individual's role in promoting justice and the common good.

During their eight weeks of immersion, these freshman students rotated through the various programs and services offered at Good Shepherd, from distributing hygiene products, serving meals, and listening to clients' stories. Their dedication and willingness to empathize with marginalized individuals have impressed us all!

Their compassion in action reminds all of us that even if our efforts feel like tiny steps, together we are making a significant impact.

Are you inspired by the students' transformative experience? Volunteer opportunities are available for individuals and groups. Contact 416.869.3619 x 262 or volunteer@goodshepherd.ca

Your Legacy of Compassion

Please remember the work of Good Shepherd Ministries in your will. Your kindness will help create a legacy of hospitality and compassion for years to come.

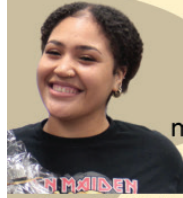
For more information, contact 416.869.3619 x 223 or adrienne@goodshepherd.ca.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS:

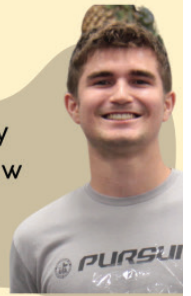
YAMILKA MORENO

Being at Good Shepherd reminded me to unlearn some of my own biases about those living in significant poverty, and more importantly, it has reminded me of my proximity to possibly fall in the same circumstances they are in – the moment you become indifferent to those living lives that are significantly more disadvantaged than yours, human dignity is lost.



MARIO SUAREZ

What is just as important is showing that you care about someone. No one wants to feel alone or neglected, so being truly present to guests is what makes our service meaningful. Sometimes a small gesture of positivity makes all the difference. Before, if I saw someone on the street, they were voiceless to me. But when I sat in on DARE sessions, suddenly I got to hear their voice—their genuine thoughts, feelings, and perspectives—and that was enlightening for me.



LIZETTE HANSON

Interacting with the clients in the DARE Program has been my favorite part of this experience. "Addiction does not discriminate; addiction doesn't care if you're rich or poor. Addiction is just waiting for you to relax and make bad choices." This statement has made me view addiction and those who are suffering from it in a new light, they are not what media and stereotypes make them seem.

AIDAN KING

It has been a privilege to have been able to witness the amazing work that Good Shepherd does in Toronto, and working here over the past eight weeks has been a life-changing experience that I will never forget. Thank you, Good Shepherd Ministries!



EXPANDING THE VETERANS PROGRAM

A Strategy to address Veteran's homelessness

Good Shepherd Ministries' Veterans Program focuses on supporting Veterans struggling with homelessness. The program began in 2010 when Good Shepherd surveyed guests which resulted in findings that 9% of clients accessing services had served in the Canadian Armed Forces. Since that finding, Good Shepherd has supported over 250 Veterans, helping more than 100 of them find safe and affordable housing, significantly impacting their lives.

Due to the lack of stable long-term funding, Good Shepherd has been unable to develop a comprehensive lasting strategy to address this issue. Good Shepherd has had to rely on a funding patchwork comprised of charitable foundations, individual donors, and organizations like the Royal Canadian Legion, to continue to provide this valuable program. This financial support has been crucial to assist Veterans experiencing homelessness and for this everyone is truly grateful.

It is with great excitement that Good Shepherd Ministries announces that it has secured funding through Infrastructure Canada to provide comprehensive support to homeless Veterans through a four-year strategy plan. This strategy has been developed in collaboration with Houselink Mainstay Housing and Good Shepherd Non-Profit Homes. Together we will support 50 homeless and 50 at-risk veterans every year. The program will house Veterans through available rent subsidies as well as market rent. Good Shepherd will also provide wrap-around support, including case management, connections to healthcare and other services in the Veterans' new communities.

Additionally, Good Shepherd will offer group sessions on social skills and life skills, to help equip Veterans with the necessary tools for leading more

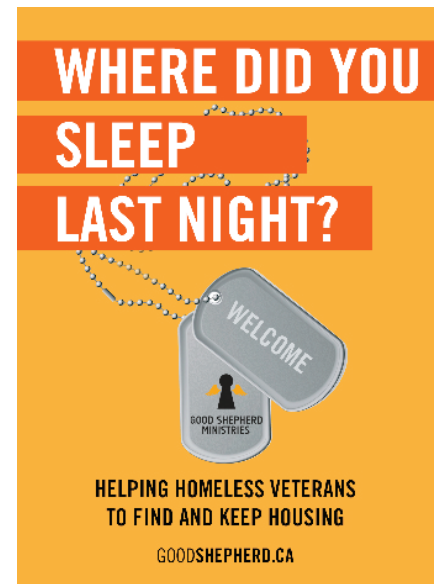
independent civilian lives. Participation in these groups will strengthen social connections with other peers and assist them in addressing social isolation.

Recognizing that not all Veterans may be aware of the services offered by Good Shepherd and partner agencies, monthly outreach visits to shelters and drop-in centers will be part of this comprehensive strategy.

Good Shepherd will continue to partner with Helmets to Hardhats (H2H), helping Veterans access training and employment opportunities to move from military service to civilian life. This commitment reflects Good Shepherd's mission and dedication to serving Veterans.

The expansion of Good Shepherd's Veterans services is ambitious. However, established partnerships will allow the pooling of resources, provide comprehensive support, and create sustainable solutions to address Veterans' unique needs.

Good Shepherd acknowledges the kind support of all the funders and partners, past and present, for helping to make a difference in the lives of Veterans experiencing homelessness who served our country and protected our freedom.



2021 Toronto Street Needs Assessment: Veteran Homelessness. In 2021, 5% of all respondents experiencing homelessness reported ever serving in the Canadian Military (including the Canadian Navy, Army, or Air Force), RCMP, and/ or Military outside of Canada). hat veterans account for approximately 4.4% of homeless individuals counted in communities across Canada in 2018.

GOOD SHEPHERD MINISTRIES PRESENTS

Silent Night Holy Auction

NOVEMBER 28-DECEMBER 12, 2024



BID ON AUCTION ITEMS | DONATE AN AUCTION ITEM

Enquiries: 416 869 3619 x262/ corliss@goodshepherd.ca

<https://can.givergy.com/SilentNightHolyAuction>

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Gregory Graham Foundation	\$8,185.00
LIUNA Local 183	\$5,000.00
Royal Canadian Legion Br. 13	\$5,000.00
Youth and Philanthropy Initiative Canada	\$5,000.00
<i>(as directed by high school students who participated in the YPI program)</i>	
Pastel Labs Inc.	\$3,750.00
Woodbourne Canada Management Inc.	\$1,500.00
The Little Rosary Shop	\$1,000.00
Queen of the Holy Rosary Shrine Lay Apostolate	\$1,000.00
Eumag Ninety Inc.	
Frederick and Douglas Dickson Memorial Foundation	
Knights of Columbus-St. Faustina Council 16254	
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McCann Realty Group	

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toothbrushes
deodorant
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shampoo

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sweatshirts
warm gloves
winter hats
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muscle rub cream
antacid-chewable
non-medicated
lozenges
ensure/boost



YOU CAN HELP SERVE MORE THAN 900 MEALS EACH DAY!



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- canned tuna & meat
- peanut butter
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- condiments
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- pasta sauce
- canned beans
- chick peas
- granola bars
- pancake mix

Drop off your gifts at

Good Shepherd Centre 412 Queen Street East

For larger collections, please call 416.869.3619 ext. 262 to arrange a pick up.

GOOD SHEPHERD
ANGELS AMONG US GALA
SAVE THE DATE

FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2025

Tickets \$400 or \$3,000 table of 8

adrienne@goodshepherd.ca

416.869.3619 x 223

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



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