

The Bridges

Cambridge Shelter Corporation

Fall 2023

MEET JEFF HESSELINK

As a young man, Jeff experienced homelessness in Calgary & Vancouver, then years later as a single dad in Guelph. From these experiences, Jeff brought several learnings that apply to his role as Chaplain at The Bridges:

- The journey of faith, like the journey of life, is not always a straight line moving upward.
- Homelessness can be a difficult and crippling situation and is not easy to pull out of once you're in it
- God is good and present, and I don't need to defend Him or argue for Him. I should be ready and able to explain the hope I have, but I don't need to worry if someone thinks differently.
- Often what I think I know is really only a very small piece of the picture, and not very accurate, so I should stay humble, willing to listen and to learn more.
- Prayer is powerful and can transform me and others;
- God's Word is powerful and has the power to change people when they hear it.



Jeff directed *nightlight*, a Drop-In Centre downtown Galt. In the early days of the pandemic he worked with House of Friendship, and in 2020 he founded Mission to the Margins where he works as Ministry Director.

Jeff has sat on several Boards of Directors and teaches seminars on homelessness for church congregations.

Jeff loves riding bikes, paddling his canoe, the Hamilton Ti-Cats, and reading. He lives in Hamilton with his wife Eliza and their two kids, along with two cats and one dog.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CSC

WE HAVE AN ARTIST



Russell recently spent a few months at the Kinsmen Centre. While there, Russ took up doodling as a way to combat boredom and to maintain his positive mindset. He was surprised by the result. Encouraged by the staff to try other mediums, Russell found some chalk and began colouring in the bricks on the outside wall. He calls it “brick art”. “Every brick is different. They just came from my mind,” Russell said. He links the stories to his life but also believes the drawings are open to interpretation. When his room-

mates told him they could relate the bricks to their own experiences, Russell was invigorated to continue colouring the wall. After working with the CSC housing team, Russell was able to move into stable and appropriate housing. While his work remains at the Kinsmen Centre, Russ says he plans to continue his new artistic hobbies at his residence.

SUMMER SLO PITCH

Summer Slo-Pitch Days are always a hit with CSC tenants and Trust Clients. With our kitchen team providing a lunch, the fellows enjoy the full baseball experience from batting to fielding to sliding into home plate.

Andrew is one of many who come out to enjoy the day.



SPDAT TRAINING

Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) is used by front-line workers at agencies that work with individuals experiencing homelessness, especially emergency shelters, to prioritize housing services.

As with all assessment tools, the key to effective use of the tool is training, practice, and sharing both successes and mistakes.

CSC has two staff members, Ian and Jake, who are certified as SPDAT Trainers. In August, Ian and Jake conducted SPDAT Training for 2 CSC staff and 7 House of Friendship staff.

As SPDAT assessments are used throughout the Waterloo Region housing stability system it is important for all front-line workers to be trained in its use.



A Message From Our Executive Director

As the dog days of summer are now in the rearview mirror we look ahead to the cooler months before us. Winter planning is well underway as we anticipate what may be our largest influx of individuals since before the pandemic. Since the beginning of summer, dozens of refugees and refugee claimants have come to us for help, and this has

kept our traditionally lower summer numbers at a higher level, and our staff busy.

Our staff, volunteers, and community acted quickly to ensure our meal program was well supplied. Basic food items, such as coffee, sugar, and creamer, were donated in abundance over the summer. Kitchen items are always welcome. With the cooler temperature of fall and then winter just around the corner, donations of warm clothing are also needed.

Our Housing and Scattered Housing support teams continue to move individuals into permanent housing at an outstanding rate, but the increased cost of stable housing still presents barriers.

Board member Dr. Erin Dej and I have been making public presentations to church groups, professional organizations, and donors. I am frequently asked what is our area of greatest need. I always reply, "compassion."

When you have the privilege, as I do, to hear the journeys that our folks have walked you quickly understand the significant roles that trauma and life issues have played in their lives. I have yet to meet one person who made a conscious decision to start a life of homelessness or addiction. Too many started down that path due to circumstances out of their control and have struggled to find an exit. With winter on the horizon, we ask that you keep those less fortunate in your thoughts and prayers.

Mr. Pull

CANADA STANDARDS PROGRAM

Cambridge Shelter Corporation is accredited through the Imagine Canada Standards Program.

The Canada Standards Program ensures excellence and leadership in five key areas:

- ◆ Board governance
- ◆ Financial accountability and transparency
- ◆ Fundraising
- ◆ Staff management
- ◆ Volunteer involvement

CSC was the first shelter in Canada accredited under this program in 2013 and has received annual reaccreditation since then.



PRIORITY NEEDS

Our housing team is in need of:

New Pillows

Blankets and comforters

(Double size)

Cooking utensils

New / Nearly new microwaves

To arrange delivery times for product donation, please email info@cambridgesheltercorp.ca

To make a financial gift:

<https://cambridgesheltercorp.ca/donate>

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: CHAPLAINCY

When establishing the range of support offered at The Bridges, the board of CSC recognized there was a need to provide spiritual care to people right where they are.

The Chaplaincy Program offers weekly spirituality group meetings, with an average attendance of 8 individuals. Individualized one on one conversations are available for any client needing a compassionate listener to hear their story. As individuals feel more comfortable sharing their needs and working towards solutions, their ability to address other issues in their lives are enhanced.

The Chaplaincy Programs runs from January through December, reaching more than 1800 individuals comprised of individuals served through our emergency shelter, housing clients, staff, and volunteers.

Chaplains actively seek solutions through faith and are an important link to hope for those we serve. The Chaplaincy Program at The Bridges is grateful to the Bridgeway Foundation for providing an honorarium to our chaplains.

You're Invited!

CSC Annual Fall Golf Classic

Friday, September 29th

Cambridge Golf Club

Registration \$175 includes:

- ✓18 holes of golf with cart
- ✓Lunch
- ✓Dinner
- ✓Chances to win great prizes
- ✓\$50 charitable tax receipt

To Register visit

<https://cambridgesheltercorp.ca/events>

Or click the QR Code:



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