



# House of Friendship

STRONGER TOGETHER

2024-2025 COMMUNITY REPORT  
[www.houseoffriendship.org](http://www.houseoffriendship.org)



# BUILDING A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY.

As we shared with you in last year's Community Report, House of Friendship is at the beginning of a new Strategic Plan, which will guide our path until 2029.

This report is the result of comprehensive input from staff, program participants, board members, volunteers and community members. And through all of this work, one theme kept emerging – the theme of health.

**Building Health, Building Belonging: House of Friendship's Strategic Plan 2024-29** will continue to keep us focused on three strategic areas:

**Investing in Organizational Health** – including the health and wellbeing of our staff;

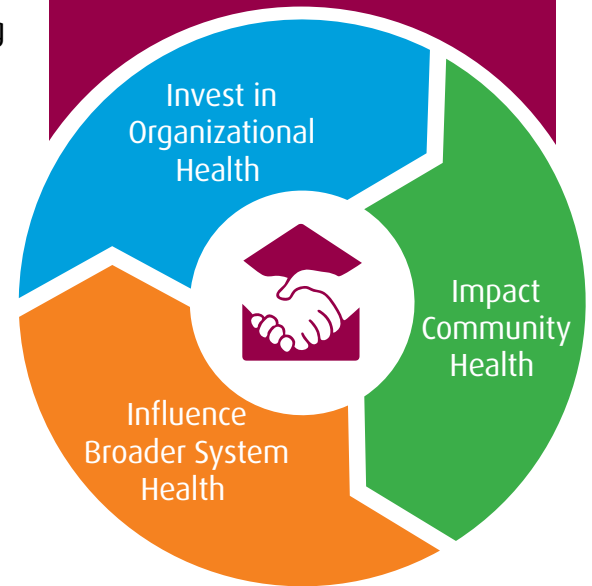
**Impacting Community Health** – walking with community members to have a positive impact on health in our community;

**Influencing Broader System Health** - extending our influence beyond our direct service work, shaping change for improved health equity for Waterloo Region and beyond.

We're excited to bring you, our dedicated supporters, along with us on this journey to not only improve the health of our staff and our program participants, but also the larger community as well.

You can read more about House of Friendship's Strategic Plan here:

## Building Health, Building Belonging Strategic Plan 2024-29



<https://houseoffriendship.org/about-us/our-strategic-plan/>.

## Vision

A healthy community where everyone can belong and thrive.

## Mission

We walk with people who need food, housing, addiction treatment and community resources.

## Values

**COMPASSION** - We extend the hand of friendship

**INCLUSION** - We believe everyone has a seat at the table

**JUSTICE** - We value a society where all have a voice

**DIGNITY**- We honour the self-respect of each person

**HOPE** - We always see hope, even in times of trouble

## Board of Directors

**Karen Bjerland**  
Board President

**Kevin Thaler**  
Vice-President

**Eric Strassburger**  
Finance Committee Chair

**Art Dyck**  
Governance Committee Chair

**Sandy Milne**  
Nominating Committee Chair

### Board Members

Mariah Blake  
Philip Holman  
Richard Manning  
April Moore  
Alan Uffelman

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE WITH HOPE

“Hope is the thing with feathers; that perches in the soul, and sings the tune without the words, and never stops – at all.” – Emily Dickinson

**It can be difficult to see the silver lining these days.** There is so much that is wrong with the world.

We see it every day in our work at House of Friendship.

**There are nearly 2,400 community members who are homeless, as well as countless others who are struggling to pay the rent.** Parents are finding it difficult to feed their children, with record numbers of community members visiting House of Friendship's Emergency Food Hampers program and our local food distribution programs throughout Kitchener and Waterloo.

As newcomers arrive in Canada, looking for a fresh start, they face innumerable challenges, from finding meaningful work that pays a living wage, to supporting their children in an unfamiliar school system, to finding a community, a place to belong.

Add in the growing uncertainty around our economy and our place in the world, and it is enough to make us want to despair.

**And yet, we continue to look to the future with hope.**

That's one of our core values at House of Friendship – “We always see hope, even in times of trouble.” And that value guides us in the work that we are doing, in our 86th year of walking alongside community members in need.

In fact, all of our values – **compassion, inclusion, justice, dignity, and hope** – are why we can stay laser-focused on the work that still needs to be done. They ground us and centre us, as we face the challenges ahead.

As we look back on the year that was, we can see glimmers of this hope everywhere.

When you read the stories on these pages, like the young men who have created a community



outreach program called Youth Smile-Link (Page 14), or as you read Jen's story on Page 12 – the story of a mother who is finally graduating high school, the same year as her daughter, you will see that hope.

And as we look to the future – to Friendship Village, our supportive and affordable housing project, and to HART Hub Waterloo Region – we see more hope, because more lives will be changed for the better.

**More people will find a pathway out of addiction and homelessness and support to feed their families because of these programs – and that means new stories of hope and resilience are coming soon. They just haven't happened yet.**

We invite you to join us in this journey of hope for the coming year, a year where we continue to remember our humble beginnings as 'House of Friendship for All Nations', and as we look forward to new ways we can walk alongside our community members in need, building health and belonging as we go.

  
**John Neufeld,**  
Chief Executive Officer

  
**Karen Bjerland,**  
Board President.

# ADDICTION TREATMENT

## Supporting Recovery and Healthy Living

### Surviving to Meet a Brighter Future

Cora-Lee is a survivor.

As a child, she endured incredible abuse – from being thrown out a window as a baby, to being treated like a maid by her adoptive family when she was a teenager.

**Cora-Lee never felt accepted, and never felt like she fit in.**

With all of this turmoil and rejection, it was only a matter of time before she turned to drugs as a means to cope.

Cora-Lee started smoking marijuana when still in high school. But it wasn't long before she was turning to stronger drugs, like crystal meth.

Her drug use took over so much of her life that Cora-Lee became homeless, moving in and out of shelters.

And one fateful night, Cora-Lee tried fentanyl for the first time.

**"I was offered a drug, and I thought it looked like crack – I thought I knew what it was," said Cora-Lee.**

She overdosed that night and was brought back after three doses of Narcan.

"I was unconscious for a day, and I didn't remember what happened," said Cora-Lee. Even with this close scare, Cora-Lee soon found herself craving fentanyl again. That's just how powerful fentanyl is - it can pull you back, even when it's the last thing you want.

"I would use it to stop the shaking, the tremors that came with withdrawal," said Cora-Lee.



Cora-Lee is rebuilding her life after decades of substance use.

**But she started seeing the toll it was taking on her – and knew she couldn't keep using drugs as a way to escape. Cora-Lee was ready to make a change.**

Through House of Friendship's Community Counselling program, Cora-Lee was able to quickly meet with an addiction counsellor and start making plans to change her substance use.

**"It helped quite a bit," said Cora-Lee. "Now I know the coping skills I need to help me in my areas of weakness."**

With this newfound stability, Cora-Lee has found long-term, affordable housing, and has started building a new life for herself.

And, as part of her healing journey, Cora-Lee is writing down her story, as a way of dealing with the trauma of those difficult years.

**Thank you for walking alongside people like Cora-Lee and helping to reduce the stigma of addiction. Through your support, lives are changed for the better!**

# Meeting a Community Need

House of Friendship is excited to partner with Community Healthcaring Kitchener-Waterloo to provide HART Hub services in Waterloo Region.

Through HART (Homeless and Addiction Recovery Treatment) Hubs, the Province of Ontario is investing almost \$550 million to support people who are experiencing homelessness and living with addiction.

Through the program, community members will connect with staff from House of Friendship and working alongside Community Healthcaring's outreach teams that are already in place. These teams will meet regularly with unhoused community members who are struggling with mental health and addiction challenges, whether they are at encampments or community programs like Ray of Hope.

**"Most supports in the community are only offered during the daytime, and with these expanded services, the HART team will meet people where they are at, into the evenings and weekends,"** said Jennifer Scott, Housing Director at House of Friendship.

In Waterloo Region, the HART Hub is not one single location. Rather, it is a network of services that have been expanded to meet the needs of the community. **House of Friendship is just one of many important partners in the HART Hub.**

The program will include a drop-in component at locations throughout the community including



HART Hub Waterloo Region will provide support to unhoused community members who are ready to make a change with their substance use.



Community Healthcaring's clinic and the Ray of Hope Community Centre, but House of Friendship will also provide transitional housing for up to 12 community members – giving them a safe home while participating in an abstinence-based program that includes life skills and recreational programming, along with counselling.

The goal is to support individuals who are chronically homeless (unhoused for more than six months) and who are ready to make a change, actively seeking a pathway out of addiction and homelessness.

**"We want to support people so they can secure permanent housing,"** said Jennifer. **"As soon as they enter the program, we will be talking about how they can get ready to live on their own."**



LEARN MORE

# Stepping Stones to Recovery | Approximately one in five Canadians will experience addiction in their lifetime - and when they do, the right support at the right time will make all the difference.



# HOUSING

## Finding a Place to Call Home

### Getting Vital Care While Homeless

**You might not realize it to look at him today, but Stephen has always been a hard worker. He used to work six days a week at Food Basics in shipping and receiving.**

“Now, I couldn’t even do a day,” said Stephen.

Stephen, now 66, was diagnosed with scleroderma three years ago – a fatal autoimmune disorder where the immune system attacks the body, causing scarring and lasting damage.

For Stephen, that damage led to a badly damaged esophagus, making it impossible for him to eat regular food. He receives most of his daily nutrition intravenously, through a catheter.

Stephen was hospitalized shortly after his diagnosis and spent nearly a year living in Grand River Hospital because he had no place to go. Stephen lost the lease on his apartment during this time.

**“It was hard in the hospital,” said Stephen. “I kept wondering, ‘Am I ever going to get out?’”**

But because of House of Friendship’s unique ShelterCare program, which provides onsite health care and other support, Stephen finally left his hospital bed and moved into our program in 2024.

**“I had a room with a little mini-fridge to keep my antibiotics in, and the Gatorade that I needed to drink to stay healthy,” said Stephen. “And I appreciated it, but it wasn’t the best place for me long-term.”**

Stephen worked with Crystal, his support worker, who worked hard to find permanent housing for Stephen – and ensure that his healthcare support would continue.



Stephen received vital support while homeless through ShelterCare.

**“They kept on pushing and pushing for me to get housing,” said Stephen. “Crystal was a lifesaver.”**

Finally, after receiving a letter from his doctor outlining the severity of his condition, Stephen was bumped up on the regional housing list, getting an accessible apartment in Kitchener.

In his new apartment, Stephen has nurses visiting him regularly, along with a personal support worker who helps him shower. He also lives near a medical lab, making it easy to keep up with the regular bloodwork his condition requires.

Stephen is thankful for the support he received while at ShelterCare.

**“It was nice knowing I had someone in my corner fighting for me,” said Stephen. “I don’t know what I would have done without that.”**

**Thank you for your faithful, compassionate support of our ShelterCare program, where men like Stephen get the help they need while struggling with homelessness. You are providing stability, dignity, and hope – thank you!**

# Bridge to Better Meals

A volunteer program at ShelterCare ensures that men experiencing homelessness can learn valuable skills to help them regain their independence. It also gives them a chance to give back.

After losing his job several months ago, James has been staying at House of Friendship's ShelterCare program.

**"I had never been homeless before, and I had never lost my job like this," said James. "And when I ended up here, I wanted to have something meaningful to do."**

James shows up for regular volunteer shifts at our ShelterCare kitchen as part of the Bridge to Better Meals program, preparing food for the other 99 men in the shelter. He does this between his daily routine of applying for full-time work and looking for housing.

**"I wanted to find something to do with my time," said James. "It gives me a sense of belonging and purpose. I'm not just freeloading - I'm able to contribute."**

The volunteer program is run like a job - participants must interview for the position and sign up for regular shifts, working approximately 20 hours a week.

Melissa Hayward, team lead in ShelterCare's Kitchen, supervises and guides the volunteers in the program.

Participants learn to cook, wash dishes, and maintain a clean working space. These skills can be



Kitchen team lead Melissa Hayward helps ShelterCare participants learn valuable life skills through the Bridge to Better Meals program.

helpful for participants who have been homeless for a significant amount of time - some of whom might never have cooked for themselves.

**"We try to meet them where they're at," said Melissa. "Being in the kitchen can be intimidating. So for some people, it's mostly just dishwashing, whereas for other people, they could learn to make soup, which is a really big step for them."**

For James, as he makes plans to rebuild his life, the volunteer program is a bright spot in his day.

**"It's nice to have something I can look forward to," said James. "I've really enjoyed being part of it."**

## The Impact of ShelterCare | Since ShelterCare opened in February 2023\*, a total of **334 men** have received emergency shelter - and more! \*Stats are from Feb. 2023 to Feb. 2025.



**69** have found permanent housing



**160** have received onsite healthcare



**27%** regularly attend recreational programs



**62%** have accessed addiction treatment



Concept rendering.

Construction on Friendship Village is now underway.

## Friendship Village Coming Soon!

**It's been a busy year at House of Friendship, as we work towards making Friendship Village a reality in downtown Kitchener.**

Construction for this new Supportive Housing and Community Hub started this spring on our Charles Street property.

Last fall, the demolition of our former aging shelter and administrative offices took place, making way for the new building, which, when both phases are complete, will include a total of 170 affordable and supportive housing homes.

The new building will provide a hub of support for all community members in the village, including the existing **House of Friendship** supportive and affordable housing residents of Eby Village (50 Eby St. S.) and Charles Village (75 Charles St. E.).

This will include onsite spaces and services to support the well-being and belonging of all residents, including health care, passive and active recreational spaces, and communal meeting areas, along with a dedicated outdoor courtyard.

In addition, the new building will be home to House of Friendship's administrative offices. In the meantime, you can find our temporary administrative headquarters at 236 Victoria St. N.

**If you are interested in a conversation to explore how you might invest in this project, we'd love to hear from you. Please reach out to Development Director Natalie Schill, at [NatalieS@houseoffriendship.org](mailto:NatalieS@houseoffriendship.org) or 519-742-8327 x 122.**



LEARN MORE

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

## Walking With Community Members

### Making a Difference.

Marisa DeLuca loves that “a-ha” moment when a child figures out a homework problem.

As a volunteer at our Adventure Learning program at Victoria Hills Community Centre, Marisa meets weekly with young students, providing support and encouragement.

**“I love seeing the development of the youth over the weeks, and being able to be a safe adult in their lives,” said Marisa. “I enjoy seeing them grow, not only on the academic side of the program but also in their social and emotional development.”**

Marisa decided to volunteer with House of Friendship last October. She is taking this year off school after completing her undergraduate degree and felt that this year away from school was a good opportunity to volunteer.

**She was inspired by the work House of Friendship is doing and wanted to be a part of it.**

Adventure Learning is the evolution of the former after-school tutoring program held at Victoria Hills. Previously, students would bring in their homework and get support. For those who didn't need homework help, volunteers and staff played educational games and used flashcards to engage the students. They also use academic worksheets and textbooks to support the students.

Now, Adventure Learning is more structured – with lessons and activities each week, focusing on age-appropriate skills they need to learn. One week might focus on math, while another might focus on science or language.



Every week, approximately 20 students show up, and Marisa has enjoyed the chance to build relationships with several of the students.

**“There’s nothing more rewarding than having a student come into the room and smile when they see you,” said Marisa. “Knowing that you are making that difference in someone’s life is incredible.”**

“I love that we are building community here,” said Marisa. “The older students are now giving back by helping the younger students.”

Marisa will continue to volunteer as long as she can. She encourages others to consider making volunteering part of their lives.

**“Committing just an hour or two of your week can make such a huge difference in someone’s life.”**

To learn more about volunteering at House of Friendship, visit [www.houseoffriendship.org/volunteer](http://www.houseoffriendship.org/volunteer), or scan the QR code.



# STRONGER TOGETHER

To belong is a powerful thing



## Food

Providing food for individuals and families in Kitchener-Waterloo

- **Over 41,000** food hampers were provided to over **10,000 households** in 2024, serving **28,000 individuals**.



## Neighbourhoods

Providing support to families living on low income.

- **5,600 children** helped this year throughout Waterloo Region.
- Programs provided in **7 community centres**. Family Outreach Workers supported **2,200 families** in **39 neighbourhoods**.

 **1 IN 8**

HOUSEHOLDS IN WATERLOO REGION RECEIVE FOOD ASSISTANCE



 **38%**

OF FOOD HAMPER RECIPIENTS REGION-WIDE ARE CHILDREN

 **8%**

OF RESIDENTS IN WATERLOO REGION STRUGGLE TO OVERCOME THE BARRIERS OF POVERTY






**9,000**

HOUSEHOLDS ARE ON THE WAIT LIST FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN WATERLOO REGION




**15%**

OF SHELTERCARE PARTICIPANTS REGULARLY ACCESS ONSITE COUNSELLING



**62%**

HAVE ACCESSED ONSITE HEALTHCARE



**1,550**

EMERGENCY CALLS IN WATERLOO REGION WERE RELATED TO OVERDOSES IN 2024



**21%**

OF CANADIANS WILL STRUGGLE WITH ADDICTION DURING THEIR LIFETIME



## Housing

Providing emergency shelter, affordable and supportive housing to overcome homelessness.

- **245 unique participants** served in ShelterCare
- **50 adults** living in Supportive Housing and **38 adults** living in Affordable Housing



## Addiction Treatment

A range of treatment options to meet the continuum of needs.

- Providing support to approximately **1,700 adults** each year

# FOOD

## Providing Food and Nourishment

### Facing New Challenges

Jen will graduate from high school this year – the same year as her daughter.

**“It only took me an extra 20 years,” said Jen. “But I’m going to do it.”**

Now in her 40s, Jen became a mother as a teenager. She dropped out of school to care for her baby. Right at the same time, her mother became ill with cancer.

**“So I was taking care of a baby, trying to work three jobs, and taking care of my mother,” said Jen. “There was no time for school.”**

Her mother eventually passed away after a battle with colon cancer – and a few years later, Jen’s father also passed away.

And then Jen herself became ill.

“I had two seizures,” said Jen. “They thought it was from stress, but it was actually epilepsy.”

Jen also struggled with addiction, and was living with an abusive partner – both adding to the significant challenges that were already in her way.

It got so bad that Jen temporarily lost custody of her children.

**“I got tired of the abuse, and I just left my ex-husband one day with my clothes, nothing else,” said Jen. “And I started over.”**

Jen has been free from substance use for nine years and was able to reunite with her children.

With all these challenges, Jen has been unable to work most of her adult life and has relied on support from House of Friendship’s food distribution program.

**“Being on disability, you can’t get much money,” said Jen. “And with rising rent costs, and the cost of food, it’s hard.”**

That’s why Jen decided to return to school, finish her high school diploma, and start building the skills she needs to return to the workforce.

Jen is grateful that she can get the food she needs to feed her family – and wants people to know how much of a difference it makes.

“By the end of the month, if you looked in my fridge, it would be almost empty,” said Jen. “My kids never go hungry, but when it comes to the end of the month, we’re pretty much going day to day.”

**Your support of our Food programs ensures that women like Jen can get the help they need to feed their families and give them the courage to face new challenges. Thank you!**



You are helping Jen begin again.

# A Community Effort

This December, more than **4,600 households** enjoyed a special holiday meal, including a turkey, halal chicken, or ham, along with a grocery gift card, through House of Friendship's Christmas Food program.

This program relies on the remarkable efforts of the **Kitchener-Conestoga Rotary Club's** annual Turkey Drive. This year, despite the Canada Post strike, club members were able to raise **an incredible \$400,000** towards the Christmas Food Program, even going to the extent of handing out their fundraising letters in a door-to-door blitz.

Your faithful, generous support of the Turkey Drive plays a crucial role in supporting individuals in our community who are struggling to provide their families with a special holiday meal.

A special thank you to our dedicated volunteers and partners, including the **Kitchener-Conestoga Rotary Club, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, Catalyst Commons, and the St. Vincent de Paul Society.** With the help of approximately **700 volunteers**, more than **16,000 individuals** in our community celebrated the holidays in a way that is meaningful for their families.



More than 700 volunteers helped make this year's Christmas Food Program a success.

**Thank you to everyone who played a role in feeding local families and individuals over the holiday season – it wouldn't be possible without you!**



# Food Bank Usage in Canada

In March 2024, **more than 2 million Canadians** received a food hamper from a food bank - more than ever recorded. And those who need help feeding their households might not be who you think they are.



Nearly **8%** are seniors



**18%** are employed



**23%** include two-parent families



**33%** are children

Source: Hunger Count 2024, Food Banks Canada

# NEIGHBOURHOODS

## Building Strong Families and Communities



Jaden, Rekik, Hiab and Haben are learning to lead, thanks to Boys in Leadership.

## Learning to Lead

A group of young men who connected through House of Friendship's Boys in Leadership program are showing that they have what it takes to lead.

Hiab, Rekik, Jaden, and Haben have created Youth Smile-Link, a program that offers many opportunities for youth like them to get together and have fun – and find a community where they belong.

**“It was really just one of those ideas you get,” said Hiab. “Usually, they are just so crazy you don’t ever do anything. But the difference was that this time, we took action.**

“We decided the community needed a place for youth to come and find opportunities,” said Hiab. “And while Boys and Girls+ in Leadership were already doing that, they were limited to Kingsdale Community Centre. So we decided to do more.”

**Boys and Girls in Leadership are two Neighbourhoods programs you are making possible with your generous, faithful support.**

Each week, young people come together at Kingsdale Community Centre, learning how to grow as leaders with guidance from community mentors.

All four youth were active participants in the Boys in Leadership program, and this served as inspiration for Youth Smile-Link, a program that they designed and led themselves.

The young men put up posters all over Kitchener and Waterloo, and used Instagram to promote their programs. And, with support from their mentors at House of Friendship, they applied for – and received – funding to get Youth Smile-Link underway.

The program included an array of youth-focused activities – a youth innovation fair, where young people came together to showcase their ideas to other organizations, a basketball tournament, and a chance to hang out and play video games. They even planned events that included local leaders like Liberal Party candidate Ismail Mohamed, who recently ran for office in South-Hespeler.

Food was provided at the events as well.

**“It’s a good feeling that you’re giving them food as well, just in case anything else is happening at home and they haven’t eaten in a while,” said Rekik.**

They credit Boys in Leadership with inspiring them to achieve new things – and believe in the impossible for themselves.

Boys in Leadership is one of many programs offered through your support of House of Friendship's Neighbourhoods programs. Your generosity ensures that these youth receive the one-on-one support and mentorship they need as they grow to adulthood - and help them become leaders in their own community.



From previous page

"I really enjoyed the role models that House of Friendship hired for Boys in Leadership - I had people like Oumar, who was pursuing school to be a doctor, and people like Nate wanting to be a teacher," said Hiab. "They were great role models that I could relate to, because they weren't too old, and knew what it was like to be growing up in this community."

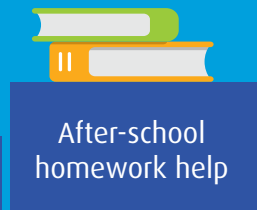
"I feel like I learned a lot from them and they helped me grow as a person," said Jaden. "They made a difference."

**Your support of Neighbourhoods programs is growing young leaders like Hiab, Jaden, Rekik, and Haben! Thank you for your care and compassion for the youth in our community!**



## Building a Pathway to Success

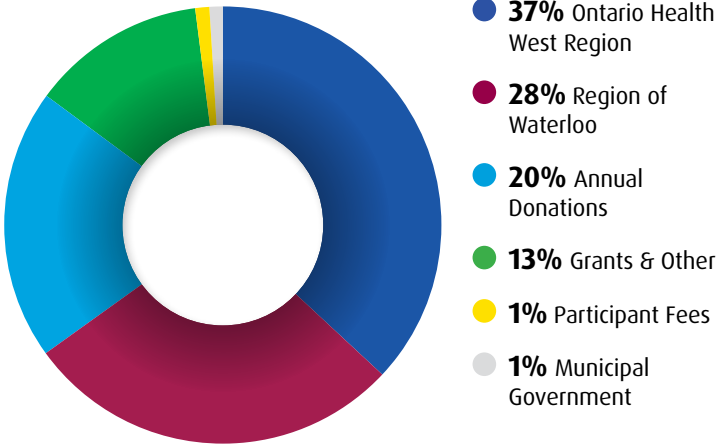
Children living in a household with low income often miss opportunities to learn and grow. By providing these opportunities, we can help **build a pathway to success.**



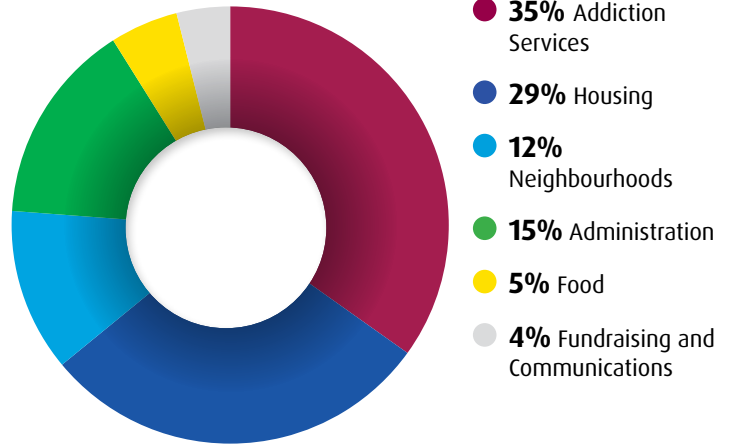
# FINANCES

## Financial Stewardship Summary 2024/25

WHERE SUPPORT COMES FROM –  
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE \$23,504,967



WHAT YOUR SUPPORT DOES –  
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES \$23,407,153



Thanks to your support, we have achieved an operating surplus for the 12th consecutive year, and we continue our commitment to financial stewardship of each donation to House of Friendship. Full audited financial statements and the 2025/26 Annual Operating Budget are available online at [www.houseoffriendship.org](http://www.houseoffriendship.org).



House of Friendship is proud to have received third-party accreditation from **Accreditation Canada** as part of our commitment to providing quality care and service to the community.

## A Special Thanks to our Major Grantors

We're incredibly thankful for the generous support of our mission by these community grantors in fiscal 2024-25:



LYLE S. HALLMAN  
FOUNDATION

General operating support grant to stabilize **Food, Housing, Addiction, and Community Programs.**



United Way  
Waterloo Region  
Communities

Helping to fight homelessness through our **ShelterCare** program.



WATERLOO REGION

Helping to end homelessness by supporting **ShelterCare.**

# MANY WAYS TO GIVE

Give Today and Make a Difference!



Give a financial donation with 3 easy ways to give:

Online at

[www.houseoffriendship.org](http://www.houseoffriendship.org)

Call

519-742-8327 x 131

Mail or drop off at

3A-236 Victoria St. N.

Kitchener, ON N2H 5C8

**OUR ADDRESS HAS CHANGED!** ↩

E-transfer or Securities:

Call Keke at

519-742-8327 x 131



**Volunteer:**

Please visit

[www.houseoffriendship.org/volunteer](http://www.houseoffriendship.org/volunteer)

to learn about the latest opportunities to help your community.



Leave a **Gift in your Will:**

A gift in your will ensures that future generations of men, women and children will be able to find the support they need in their most difficult season of life.

To find out more, call Joanne at

519-742-8327 x 137 or visit

[www.houseoffriendship.org/Wills](http://www.houseoffriendship.org/Wills)



## Increase Your Impact with Monthly Giving!

Consider becoming a **MONTHLY DONOR**, or scan this QR code and start right now! Monthly giving provides ongoing program support for families and individuals in Waterloo Region, while reducing administrative costs, ensuring that more of your donations will reach those in need. To become a monthly donor, please contact us at **519-742-8327 x 131** or [fundraising@houseoffriendship.org](mailto:fundraising@houseoffriendship.org)

## Donate needed items:

Throughout the year, House of Friendship programs need specific items to support our work throughout Waterloo Region. *Please review which items are being accepted, as well as donation drop-off times, at [www.houseoffriendship.org/donations](http://www.houseoffriendship.org/donations).*



# LEAVE A LEGACY OF HOPE

## A Gift in Your Will for Future Generations

### A Commitment to the Future

**House of Friendship has always been a part of Linda Kruger's story.**

Her mother, Agnes Eby, served on the board at House of Friendship in the 1970s.

As a young university student, Linda volunteered, and covered the desk during weekly staff meetings.

Similarly, Linda's husband Chuck learned about House of Friendship while growing up at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, and later as a teacher at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate.

Chuck and Linda both attended teachers' college together. After graduation, they spent several years in western Canada.

**"When we moved back to Ontario, while looking for part-time teaching, I read an article about House of Friendship's 'Live and Learn' program and**

**thought it sounded like a great program," said Linda. "And it wasn't too long after that there was a job posting."**

Linda joined Live and Learn in 1988, helping provide support to women with children experiencing low income. She stayed with House of Friendship for 32 years, and, in retirement, continues to volunteer.

Linda said that the relationships she built and enjoyed over the years were an important reason she stayed at House of Friendship that long. But she also saw the impact of the work.

**"Chuck and I grew up in families and faith communities where we felt supported," said Linda. "Those gifts were life-changing for us."**

**"Too many people haven't grown up with that same sense of belonging. I saw people experience that through House of Friendship."**

Today, Chuck and Linda are continuing their commitment, by choosing to leave a gift in their will to House of Friendship, building on the years of trust and relationships they've already witnessed.

"Legacy giving focuses the need just as much or more than a lot of other kinds of giving, to find an institution you trust and one that is doing valuable work," said Chuck.

"If you have the opportunity, start by giving your time and getting to know more about the organization," said Linda. "That also becomes part of your gift."

**"Even a small gift can have a big impact - it's satisfying to know that whatever you give will continue to make a difference in our community."**

**To learn more about leaving a gift in your will to House of Friendship, contact Development Manager Joanne Adair at [joannea@houseoffriendship.org](mailto:joannea@houseoffriendship.org).**



Linda and Chuck Kruger are leaving a gift in their will to House of Friendship.

# HERE WHEN YOU NEED US

To access these services, or for information, call **519-742-8327**, or [houseoffriendship.org](http://houseoffriendship.org).

## ADDICTION TREATMENT

---

### SUPPORTING RECOVERY AND HEALTHY LIVING

Call 1-844-437-3247 (HERE247) to apply for these services. NOTE: All programs, except for live-in treatment, are now offered virtually as well as in person.

#### Live-In Treatment

Live-in, abstinence-based and counselling-focused programs for men and women, including Justice Pathway transfers from prison.

#### Day Treatment

Introductory group counselling and intensive two-week day programs for men and women. Held in Cambridge, Guelph and Kitchener.

- **Moving Forward**

Specialized support for individuals identifying as female who are pregnant or parenting children from 0-6.

#### Counselling Services

Counselling services available for individuals, groups and families concerned with addiction, substance use, problem gambling, gaming and internet use.

#### Community Addiction Support Services

Programs provided by House of Friendship together with community partners:

- **Concurrent Supportive Housing:** Counselling for adults with addiction challenges living in dedicated units in Waterloo Region.
- **Community Withdrawal Support Service (CWSS)** Support to help eligible individuals to have planned withdrawal from substances. Apply at 519-742-8327 x 562.
- **Homeless and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hub:** Community-based support, as well as transitional housing, for unhoused people who are ready to change their substance use.
- **Justice Mental Health Support:** Specialized support for individuals returning to supportive housing from incarceration.
- **Rapid Access Addiction Medicine Clinic (RAAM)** A walk in short-term medical clinic for substance use. For hours and locations, visit [www.houseoffriendship.org/raam](http://www.houseoffriendship.org/raam) or call 519-742-8327 x 562.

## FOOD

---

### PROVIDING FOOD AND NOURISHMENT

#### Emergency Food Hampers

Providing food for individuals and families at one centralized location.

#### Neighbourhood Food Distribution

Providing food for families in their own neighbourhoods in multiple locations in Kitchener-Waterloo.

#### Christmas Food Program | [www.christmassupport.ca](http://www.christmassupport.ca)

Providing food for individuals and families at Christmas.

## NEIGHBOURHOODS

---

### BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

#### Family Outreach Program | [www.familyoutreach.ca](http://www.familyoutreach.ca)

Providing access to vital community resources for families with children 17 years of age and under who are living on low income.

#### Community Centre Programs

Supporting families and individuals living on low income in the following neighbourhoods:

- Centreville Chicopee
- Chandler Mowat
- Courtland Shelley
- Forest Heights
- Kingsdale
- Sunnydale
- Victoria Hills

#### Neighbourhood Food Programs

Community food programming to build belonging and connection in low-income neighbourhoods.

## HOUSING

---

### SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS TO FIND A PLACE TO CALL HOME

#### ShelterCare | [www.sheltercare.ca](http://www.sheltercare.ca)

Emergency shelter for men experiencing homelessness, with wraparound supports to become healthier and housed.

#### Supportive Housing

Permanent affordable housing for single adults, with support services that foster recovery from homelessness and community integration. Participants from the Prioritized Access to Housing Support (PATHS) list are eligible.

- Eby Village and Charles Village

#### Affordable Housing

Available for those requiring financial assistance and are on the Community Housing Access Centre (CHAC) list.

- Eby Village



# House of Friendship

## Rising to the Challenge

Every year, the impact of your support grows. On these pages, you have seen stories that show again and again what a difference it means when you rise to the challenge and walk alongside your neighbours.

Through your compassion and courage in the past year, you have shown us what it means to care, to believe in hope, to walk with your community members, and to lend a bit of your strength to individuals who are already strong and resilient, but just need a little help along the way.

We are inspired by you – and by our community members who are overcoming their struggles and rising to the challenge, one day at a time.

**Thank you for being living examples of our House of Friendship values of compassion, inclusion, justice, dignity and hope!**

3A-236 Victoria St. N.  
Kitchener, ON N2H 5C8

**Phone:** 519-742-8327

**Email:** [admin@houseoffriendship.org](mailto:admin@houseoffriendship.org).

[www.houseoffriendship.org](http://www.houseoffriendship.org)  
Charitable # 10749 3892 RR0001

About the Cover: The women of Sunnydale Community Centre exemplify the incredible work that happens every day in our Neighbourhoods programs across Waterloo Region.

