

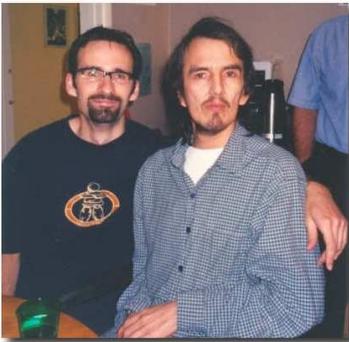
House of Hesed

Autumn 2005

... building a place of lovingkindness

Hesed is a Hebrew word used in the Old Testament to describe the eternally loyal, lavish, extravagant, unrestrained, compassionate, merciful love of our Father God. As recipients of this divine love, we desire to emulate His compassion in our attitudes and actions towards others, particularly toward those people living with HIV/AIDS.

What is Hesed To Me



In 2000 I began volunteering at the House of Hesed. I came for lunch, for supper, and for snacks. I came for conversations with Moe, other staff, and with the residents. I came because I wanted a place to 'serve God'. I continued to visit because I felt welcomed, valued, and I was able to have an impact, even if it was only cleaning a cupboard, watching TV with a resident, or staying the night so that the regular live-in staff could have a break. God filled me up as I became more involved over the following 3 years.

In 2003 I had my first mid-life crisis (*I plan on having several*): What was I going to do with my life? I'd finished university, spent a couple of years working here and there, but I wanted a change. (*To be honest I was out of work, living with my parents again, and bored stiff*). As I deconstructed who I was and tried to figure out who I wanted to be, God revealed what really matters to me: helping people in need. I decided I had to serve people one-on-one, not from a desk, but right there with them (*and yes Hesed has desks, but that's not the point*). That spring I began working full-time at Hesed with Moe.

What a learning curve! I couldn't have imagined there was so much to do! Let me tell you, running a house for 5 to 9 often not-well people is an overwhelming task at times. Luckily our God is awesome and so are the staff and volunteers. My memory was stretched and at times became non-existent as I struggled to keep in mind everything that was constantly happening (*give that, write this, talk about that, clean this, who broke that, etc*). But there were so many good things that I got to do in the midst of all the craziness and God-sent peace at just the right times: I got to try out the administrative gifts that God has lent me; I was so blessed to work with Moe (*who is still the most compassionate person I've ever met regardless of what she might say*) and the other great staff and volunteers; and I am part of a home and family where God is the focus.

I remember vividly the first time I thought: "I want to serve others the rest of my life". Sherry (not her real name) had been part of our home for some time, making her mark, being part of the family. She had her ups and downs, but we loved her and let her know often. I was staying overnight at Hesed to fill in for the live-in staff person and I was also working at Hesed during the day. During that time Sherry's health declined due to her HIV/AIDS. Eventually she wasn't able to leave her bed, nor communicate, and she was on pain medication around the clock. During this sad time her family was able to come and go as they wanted, make food, have coffee, and stay overnight. It was amazing to see everyone come together for her! I sat and listened as Sherry's sister held her hand and said goodbye, that she loved her, and that it was okay to leave. I was there when Sherry took her last breaths.

(continued on page 2)



What Is HeseD To Me

(Continued from page 1)

After she passed away her sister thanked me with tears in her eyes and told me just how much the House of HeseD had done for their family. This experience is the biggest shining diamond in my walk with God. I cannot describe the life that welled up in my heart at that moment, but it has changed me. I know what real life feels like now and I am ruined for anything less. Glory be to God alone for bringing us the House of HeseD.

There is someone else's story that I'd like to tell as well. Greg (not his real name) came to HeseD around the same time that I began volunteering in 2000. I was there when he arrived in poor health, when he got better, and when he got worse. I sat in his room for hours keeping him company. I helped him do all the necessities of life. We got to do fun stuff together like spontaneously go cruising in the car for no reason at all (which he loves enormously), go shopping, visit his family, or go out to the movies or to church. Greg's ready smile amazes me! I feel like we are two pilgrims who have traveled together and found a simple yet strangely real understanding of each other and God.

Given two months to live when he first arrived, he has now been here for five years! He has profoundly affected how I understand the *HeseD* of God – His great steadfast compassionate graceful love. God is merciful and graceful beyond measure folks! They are like two sides of the same coin: With one hand God can withhold the consequences that our choices certainly deserve (mercy), and with the other He can give the blessings that we certainly do not deserve (grace), namely eternal life starting right now. Wherever you are at, God wants to bring you home. Self-righteousness has no place before God. I am just as undeserving as Greg, and yet *HeseD* has materialized tangibly and practically for us and many others in the people at the House of HeseD.

I find that in serving others you receive far more than you give. In giving my time and energy I receive what is priceless to me: abundant joyful fulfilling life serving others in the name of Jesus Christ. I find the place of life that I am seeking: to help someone one-on-one, right there in the room with them and it feels great!

Cam Tucker

HESED FAMILY NEWS

The past few months have been a time of great change at House of HeseD. We experienced some significant losses.

Maresa, Dion and Bella (*the Boo*) Davidson moved to Nova Scotia leaving many of us very sad. Maresa had been part of HeseD for the past few years and continued to work with just a few months before they moved. They were and are a very valuable part of the family. Some of you may remember the "Bella gallery" at the original House of HeseD at 260 Langside. We'll miss them a ton, but I guess on the upside we've all got a place to stay when we go to Nova Scotia. (Sorry Maresa, did I scare you? No worries, we'll phone before we come and won't stay for more than a month)

Cameron Tucker has gone to seminary in Vancouver for at least a year. We miss him terribly and can't wait to see him at Christmas. Bless him, he is still maintaining our Web site and doing some of the administration stuff through the magic of the "computer". Thank God for Msn Messenger. Cam, the leftovers are piling up and no one will test the outdated food to see if it's still good or not!!!

Kristina Eddins, a long time volunteer has gone back to America. We're really going to miss having her around. Kristina is an "extra mile" gal and always willing to do whatever we asked. We wish you all the best in the future. Now you come back and see us sometime *ya hear!*



Bella-boo Davidson



We are so Blessed with the staff and volunteers that we have at HeseD. God always provides the Best of the Best. We love that He is ever present in our lives and in this place. Please pray for us that the love would continue to flow and bring healing.



Memorials



This newsletter is in memory of 3 of our Beloved Residents who passed away this summer. We here at Hased have never experienced such a huge loss in so short a time. It was a privilege and an honour to call each one our friend. We take comfort in knowing that in the last months, weeks and days of their lives here on earth they were surrounded by love, prayers, and laughter. They always had a hand to hold or a shoulder to cry on. Were it not for our God and the prayers of our wonderful Hased friends, I think we would not have been able to cope with our grief as well as have. He is our source in every way and at all times.

Wanda, Rocky and Monique were truly cherished and valued. They have now passed on to “new life” in Jesus and we rejoice in His faithfulness.

Wanda May 1, 2005

Wanda-Mae was lovely, funny and a straight shooter. We miss her sense of humour, her gentleness, her smile, her “cheekiness” her zest for life and her stories. I love the way her whole face would light up when Rocky, Cam or Flynn would walk into the room. I loved the way she loved her children with her whole being. We have many sweet memories of Wanda and miss her dearly.

Rocky May 27, 2005

Rocky was a dapper, intelligent, articulate, gentleman. Feisty and stubborn, generous, kind and funny. Rocky always let us know exactly what he was thinking. Every time we see an apple tree we will think of Rocky. Rocky was a very significant member of our family and his absence is deeply felt.

Monique June 2, 2005

Monique was only with us for a short time, but her tender, gentle presence was a sweet gift to all of us. She was so generous and thoughtful, often more concerned about the well being of others than about herself. Monique touched each one of us in a different way but we all come away with the gift of knowing her.



THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO MADE THE LAST FUNDRAISER SUCH A SUCCESS! FROM WHAT PEOPLE HAVE SAID EVERYONE HAD A GREAT TIME!!! Thank you so much! You're AMAZING!!! Thanks to... Fiona, Colleen, (the Gere's), Tye and Board, Pastor Troy, Dean Jenkinson, Starbucks!!! We honestly have so many people to thank all the time, it's overwhelming! Thanks to our wonderful grocery shoppers, Little Bailey (Minnie Moe) who volunteered ALL summer, Alfredo and, and, and, the list goes on. Know you're loved!

New Additions To The Family



Congratulations

IT'S A BOY...

Brian James has been hired to do the overnight shift. Brian brings many gifts to House of Hesed; Compassion, a calm and gentle spirit, kind heart, a listening ear, a great sense of humour, (laughter is very, very important around here). Brian is also an incredibly talented musician and song writer.



... AND A GIRL!!

Marnie is here 4 days a week, doing some of the stuff Cam used to do. Marnie is a real go getter; the grass won't be growing under her feet. She is compassionate, kind, gentle, energetic, nurturing and has a very contagious laugh. Marnie is also a prayer warrior who is extremely sensitive to what God is doing here at Hesed.

Welcome here guys, you're wonderful!

Opportunities Abound...

If you would like to be part of the family as well, consider volunteering with us... You'll soon realize there is a place for you at House of Hesed, no matter who you are or what you like to do! Feel free to look at our website, www.houseofhesed.ca for a **HUGE LIST** of volunteer opportunities or give us a call at the number below. Talk to Marnie about this and other opportunities to help out. There's always something to do at Hesed



Online Prayer Network

Victoria James has volunteered to organize an online prayer network for House of Hesed. This is something we have been praying for during the past 7 years. We are grateful to Victoria and for everyone who has signed on to the "network". Your prayers encourage us and keep the enemy out the door!