

SPRING 2014

hope MISSION

Celebrating new life at Spring Banquet

FRIDAY APRIL 4TH

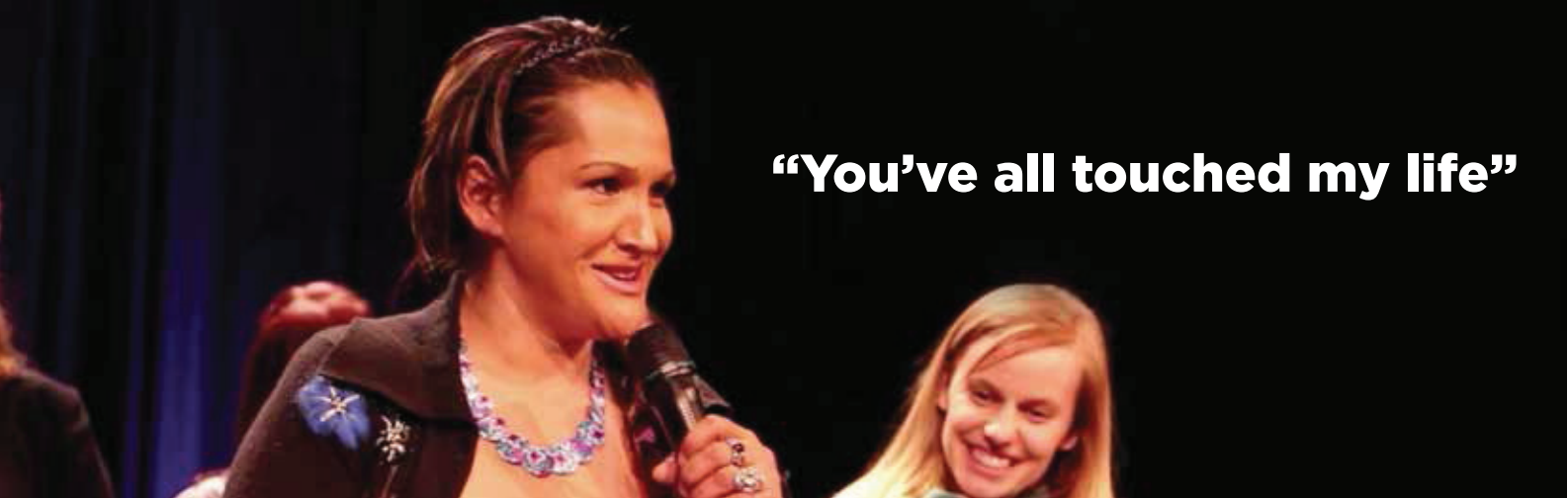
RESERVE YOUR TICKETS TODAY!

CALL 780.453.3877

Also Inside

Hope Given, Love Found
A Greenhouse for the Soul
Giving Hope to Kids

LTC
First Nations
or Games



“You’ve all touched my life”

SPRING BANQUET

Come Celebrate New Life

In this season of renewal and growth, we invite you to a celebration. As our Hope Mission Spring Banquet and Graduation approaches, men and women are getting ready to celebrate the transformation that has grown from tiny seeds of hope. People like Taanis, who graduated from our Wellspring Women’s recovery program last year, invite you to share in their abundant joy.

As with all good celebrations, you will be treated to an excellent feast, prepared by the same skilled and loving hands that serve our homeless neighbours every day at Hope Mission. You’ll share a table with graduates from our recovery programs. These are the neighbours whose lives have changed because of your generosity. This is an opportunity to connect and share smiles of gratitude.

You will witness firsthand the power of hope to change a life.

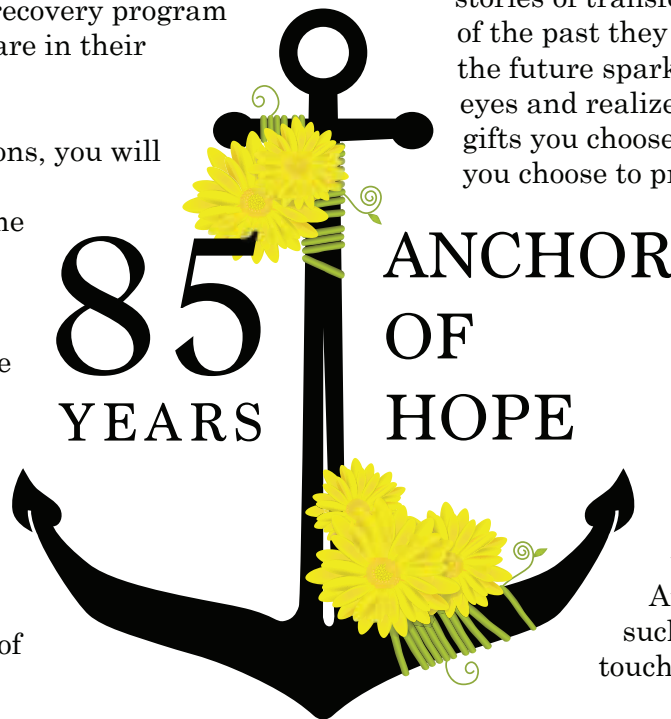
You will hear hope set to music, as dozens of exuberant children fill the stage with song, bringing joy and electricity as only kids can. Don’t be surprised to find yourself smiling, laughing and even dancing along with these kids who may not get to smile and dance and laugh much at home – kids for whom a hot meal may

be a luxury. Thanks to you, hope is making a difference in their lives.

As recovery graduates cross the stage, each diploma will mark months of hard-won battles against addiction. Each photo flash will shine a victory. You will hear graduates share their stories of transformation. You’ll learn some of the past they have overcome. You’ll see the future sparkle bright in their smiling eyes and realize, at that moment, that the gifts you choose to give – the simple meals you choose to provide – bring a glorious freedom for these men and women. You will smile with graduates like Taanis.

“Believe me when I say to you,” shared Taanis at last year’s graduation, “you’ve all touched me. You’ve all touched my life through your generosity.” And, of course, as you hear such words, you in turn will be touched.

Last year’s Spring Banquet and Graduation sold out, and it’s easy to see why.



Call today to reserve your tickets!

(780) 453-3877

Friday, April 4TH at 6:00pm

Location: Sherwood Park Alliance Church

Tickets are \$10



HOPE GIVEN, LOVE FOUND

A Love Story, but First a Recovery Story

"I missed the bus and would have been late for curfew," says Tanya, "but a friend arranged a ride."

"I was at an AA meeting," explains Jon, "when I was asked to give somebody a ride. You know, sometimes being a minute late can change the outcome of a life."

Tanya notes, "There was something about Jon that felt comfortable." Jon says, "When Tanya got in,



I went, wow! Who's that girl? But she was in the recovery program, and for me that's out of bounds." Jon had graduated from Hope Mission's recovery program, and was now on staff. "One of the things Breakout taught me was that first, I needed to be me, without anybody." And I was staff, I can't date clients, I took that very seriously."

"We talked easily," says Tanya, "as if we had known each other for a long time. But I kept my distance, I didn't want to get involved. I was just beginning the [Wellspring] program."

Tanya's road to Hope Mission had been a painful one. "I really struggled with feeling unworthy. My parents always told me that I was good for nothing, that I was stupid, dumb—I felt like the worst person ever."

Tanya wanted to prove everybody wrong. But it was hard to get past so much hurt. Tragically, while driving drunk, Tanya had an accident. She was incarcerated for 15 months, and upon release, her consuming focus was custody of her daughter. While in a short-term program, Tanya found out about Hope Mission's recovery community. "I began rebuilding my life, then, in the summer of 2010, I got my daughter back!"

"I've come a long way, and I'm grateful."

Tanya graduated from Wellspring, found a good daycare and began a part-time job with Hope Mission. "Balancing all that out was hard. But I was clean and sober, and in a good place. Hope Mission helped me through some real rough patches. I've come a long way, and I'm grateful."

In the meantime Jon was working night shifts and taking classes during the day. Jon's own recovery journey began over five years ago. But he recalls vividly his times of depression, "I was near the end. I wanted to die!" He remembers, "I never stayed at a homeless shelter before and I was preparing to leave the next morning—but a staff member saw something in me and told me I should stay inside—trust me, my plan was to end it that day." *(Continued)*



A GREENHOUSE FOR THE SOUL

Gardens Grow at Hope Mission

Gardening has a way of nurturing the soul. In the world of health care this notion even has a name: therapeutic horticulture. Studies show that gardening, tending to a few plants, even just being out in a natural landscape, improves cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.

This is an understanding that's at the root of Hope Mission's garden projects. From the garden and greenhouse at Bethany Homes in Wetaskiwin, to SHIFT, Hope Mission's youth program, partnering with Riverbend Gardens, to the indoor garden at the Tegler Youth Centre—the health giving virtues of looking after plants are evident.

Kathy, who has now graduated from the

Wellspring program, says, "It's been so healing. When I'm on my hands and knees in the garden, picking peas or pulling weeds, I can feel the trauma leave my body."

The bonus of course is that the produce grown, is used by the Mission. Last fall, women in Wellspring had the experience of eating a meal they grew themselves; the kids at Tegler relished eating their own tomatoes; while the youth in SHIFT, hosted a produce sale with much of the proceeds going to Hope Mission.

"It's been so healing."

Tending to a part of God's creation connects us to who we are as God's creatures—the elemental work of gardening, is a greenhouse for the soul.

(Continued from page 1) Another Intake Worker played a huge part in Jonv's fist day. "He wasn't even starting his shift, yet he personally booked me in and told me all about the Breakout Program." It wasn't always smooth, Jon came close to leaving, but, "...grace won out. The chaplains and staff at Hope Mission have been my rock throughout. They were hard on me when they needed to be, and had mercy at just the right time. I owe them what I am today."

Although a year had passed, Jon never forgot the girl that got into his truck. "I saw her at the Mission banquet in a beautiful dress...and when I passed her, somehow, I knew she was going to be in my life."

"I guess sparks flew," adds Tanya. "He was so different from anyone I had dated before. I could talk to him like a best friend." Some months went by and Jon proposed. "Chaplain Ed helped me pick out the ring." Tanya laughs, "Jon needed tires

for his truck but he bought a ring instead. Good choice!"

Tanya remembers the wedding, "...we were in a beautiful backyard, I was walking down the aisle and as soon as I saw Jon I started to cry, I was marrying my soul-mate, my best friend."

Jon recalls, "We had decided it was going to be just us and Chaplain Randy. Well, it turned into an actual wedding. Friends we didn't know we had offered their place. Old friends showed up. More friends brought an amazing meal. Everything flowed. God was there!"

Today Jon and Tanya are living in Saskatchewan, Jon has a job he's dreamt of, and together they are raising a beautiful family of five.

"I hope our story helps people see how much Hope Mission means to hurt people. Here we are, years down the road—it's like a miracle."



GIVING HOPE TO KIDS

Hope for Kids Across Alberta

It's a big dream: prevent homelessness by reaching children. Prevent homelessness and addiction by ensuring hungry children are fed, by ensuring every child knows the love of God and is cared for. Prevent homelessness one child at a time. And though that goal is still far off, through God's grace and your prayers, together we are taking small steps in that direction.

Today, if you looked in at Hope Mission's work with kids, you'd notice our after-school program, Kids-In-Action, flourishing in six Edmonton schools, two in Wetaskiwin, and in our Centre in Calgary's Forest Lawn. You'd see kids enjoy hot meals twice a week at the Tegler Youth Centre, and you'd see a lunch program, Food4Thought, running in seven schools in Wetaskiwin.

"One child at a time."

And in and through this, you'd see staff and volunteers connect with kids through everything from hip-hop to Kids' Church, from skateboarding to gardening. And of course you'd see the extensive work that even now, is going into preparing for 800 kids who will be coming to summer camps in both Northern and Southern Alberta.

But it's the things you won't see that make Hope Mission's kids programs so crucial. That is, you won't see kids lost to the street, lost to addiction, to self-abuse, to gang violence and incarceration. Kids who become community, who become "family," don't feel neglected, excluded, abandoned, alone, worthless.

Two years ago Hope Mission received an award from the Wetaskiwin Public Schools' Community, in recognition for our work with vulnerable children. It was an honour. But more rewarding by far, is to see hope rise in the eyes of even one child, who has found himself truly valued for who he is.

One boy who we'll call Robbie, regularly attends Hope Mission's after-school program in Edmonton. His parents are separated and so he spends summers with his dad in Calgary. Robbie



Hope Mission's new camp in Southern Alberta

was ecstatic to find out that, as he put it, "the mission hope," was in his dad's neighborhood in Calgary too. Now he can experience the love and support all year round: continuing the journey towards and into God's love. Matt Cairns, manager of Tegler Youth Centre said, "We got to be a consistent presence in his life through the year."

The dream is fulfilled one child at a time.

"We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul..." **Hebrews 6:19**

An anchor of hope—for the souls of hurting people—was the image that propelled the founders of Hope Mission. Today, after 85 years, it's still more than an apt symbol, I believe it reflects the entirety of our ministry.

That original hope, anchored as it is upon the rock of the Gospel, is the footing that has given strength and life to the ministry of Hope Mission and its diverse and expanding programs.

As we look ahead to Easter and remember the reason for our hope, it's also wonderful to look back over the decades and see God's sustaining grace in this long collaborative effort of active compassion. We know as well that it's only through your prayers and your gifts, that we are empowered to



daily reach out and meet the critical needs of our distressed neighbours. We are, in fact, moored by your faithful support.

I do hope you'll come to our Annual Spring Banquet. Come and celebrate the lives reclaimed because of your heartfelt concern, and through God's grace—our anchor of hope.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for caring.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Reith".

Bruce Reith
Executive Director

MORE WAYS TO GIVE

GIVE \$2.70 This small amount makes a big impact: it gives more than a hot meal to a hungry person, it gives hope.

GIVE MONTHLY Your continued support helps us respond effectively just as the need arises.

VOLUNTEER We are always seeking passionate, dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers to join us. Email volunteer.services@hopemission.com to get started.

LEAVE A LEGACY Remember Hope Mission in your will. Call 780.453-3877 to find out how a planned gift will uplift people in need for years to come.

DONATE GOODS As winter cold sets in, we are in need of warm clothing, especially jackets, ski gloves, underwear and socks, toques, boots, hoodies and jeans.

THANK YOU FOR WALKING

Thank you to everyone who walked in the Coldest Night of the Year presented by Boardwalk. By walking in the cold you helped people find hope. Tell your story of the walk on Hope Mission's facebook page and get ready to walk again next year!



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HOPE MISSION CENTER
780.422.2018
we.care@hopemission.com
9908 106 Ave | www.hopemission.com
P.O. BOX 953, Edmonton, AB T5J 2L8

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