



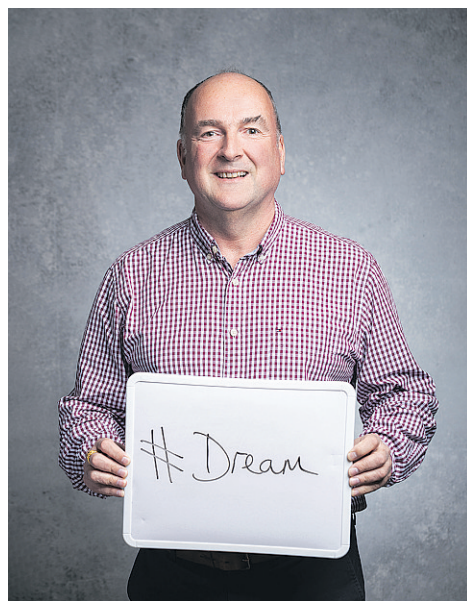
**ourplace**

**Hope and Belonging**

**nourish**  
**hope**



## Grateful and Conflicted in this time of need



**Julian Daly, CEO, Our Place Society**

**W**hen the wet and the cold weather begins, I am grateful and conflicted in equal measure.

I am grateful because of the hard work and compassion that has gone into moving over 500 people into

supportive housing in the last few years. The stories we hear daily from those who have a warm, dry place to lay their head at night makes our hearts grow three sizes (to borrow a quote from Dr Suess). This was only possible through the support of our donors, plus local and provincial governments, and you can read some of these stories on our website at [ourplacesociety.com/stories](http://ourplacesociety.com/stories)

I am conflicted, however, because of two things. One, I despair that over one-third of our housed residents are indigenous (a statistic that is doubly shocking when you consider only five percent of our country's population identifies as such) and another third are over the age of 55. To me, this shows a failure on behalf of our society when we allow so many indigenous and seniors to fall into homelessness without adequate financial, addiction, and health supports.

My second issue is with those who are left on our streets.

True gratitude will be when I walk down Pandora and there is no one huddled in a doorway or curled in the fetal position and clutching a glass pipe because life has become too unbearable. I don't want to see tents and tarps as homes.

We invite people into our Community Centre to discover services, get a warm meal, access showers and clothing to best get them through the day. It is something that we are very good at, but I don't want to help lift someone up only for them to return to the streets and a rain-soaked cardboard box for shelter.

In a recent survey of the street entrenched in B.C., it showed that 68% of people are struggling with addiction. That tells us that what we are seeing on our streets is a health crisis on a dramatic scale. This is one of the reasons that we opened New Roads, a therapeutic recovery community in View Royal. But not everyone is ready to take that giant step toward recovery.

Abandoned and alone, driven by addiction, so many of the people we see every single day would have no place to get warm or have anything to eat if it wasn't for Our Place.

We live by our values of inviting everyone inside, but with rising food costs, even that faces jeopardy. We are fortunate to have donors who believe as much as we do in helping others, and I want you to know that we do not take that for granted.

Financial donations are down at Our Place because people everywhere are struggling, but I need to ask you to keep us in mind when you are deciding on your annual charitable giving. We are determined to help everyone who comes through our doors, and we know that with your help, we can continue to make that possible.

*Julian Daly*  
CEO, Our Place Society

## NOURISHING HOPE IN LIVES TODAY!

To donate to Our Place Society please call 250-940-5060, email [donors@ourplacesociety.com](mailto:donors@ourplacesociety.com), or visit us at [ourplacesociety.com/donate](http://ourplacesociety.com/donate)



TV SCREEN INSIDE



# Finding hope in the moment through Spiritual Care



*Spiritual Care Worker Jordan Shaw spends his days at Our Place making connections with people at the downtown community centre. Sharing time over a meal can mean everything to a person who is often isolated and alone, separated from family and other sources of support. When no one else is there, employees like Jordan make every effort to be there for our family members in times of need.*

**I**t's hard not to get emotional talking to Jordan Shaw, Our Place's Spiritual Care Worker, as he describes what he experiences and the people he has come to know. From the man with a 6-year-old's mental capacity because of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder who lives on our streets, to the person who was discharged from the hospital in pain and

in crisis with nowhere to go, to the one who lost all his belongings to theft and was left with literally nothing to call his own, Jordan is one of the key members of staff at Our Place who are there for the people who have been all but forgotten.

"A lot of people drive by this community, and they just see a problem," says Jordan.

"They don't see a collection of absolutely unique and wonderful individuals who are each doing their best just to survive. We're talking about real human beings, about real people. This is a community of survivors. It's a community of people who have seen more trauma and death and pain than most of us will ever see in our lifetimes. And it can be truly heartbreaking."

Since 2009, Jordan has been working with marginalized people in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, and now in Victoria, providing spiritual care to people who have been abandoned for essentially their entire lives.

"This population has dealt with such a large amount of loss, and of mistrust, and of simply being left, and often at a very young age," he says. "Left by people who were supposed to care for them. Left by people who were supposed to protect them. It's a highly traumatized population and many of the people we serve were traumatized by their parents or have been in foster care since they were little, or whatever the case may be. I see my work as attempting to be a piece of the puzzle that helps people find their humanity again and helps them find their source of strength that they may not even know they have."

At Our Place we believe that everyone should experience unconditional love in a non-judgmental way, and the spiritual care program is an essential part of this. The program offers time and space for people to safely explore their connection with things other than themselves, which can be critical in finding a way out of the depths of addiction and homelessness. "On Thursdays and Fridays, we have our spiritual care room [a dedicated space at 919 Pandora] open and we have snacks, as well as activities like board games and art. There's a sharing circle on Thursdays, and bible study on Mondays that's run by

some of our wonderful volunteers. When people are in this calming space, we can sit and talk with them, start to unpack what's going on, build trust, and find that hope in the moment. The most important person in the world is the person sitting in front of you, and we treat everyone as that. To engage with them and to recognize the humanity of one another, that's when amazing things can happen."

One family member, who prefers not to be named, credits spiritual care at Our Place with being a primary motivator in helping her re-claim her life from addiction and homelessness. She says: "Addiction is a sickness of the soul. It was only my spirituality, my connection to something more than myself, that helped heal that broken part of my soul and take me through my journey with recovery."

Adds Jordan: "Spirituality for me is about your relationship with yourself, your relationship with others, and your relationship with your higher powers, whatever that may be for you. That's caring for the individual as a person, as a human being, not as a situation that needs to be fixed. Regardless of circumstances, of faith, or skin colour, or sexuality, or any of those things, each person is valued and treasured. It's about saying to someone, 'I recognize the pain you are going through. I see you, and I'm right here with you.' That's what we offer here at Our Place."

*Jordan is just one of the hundreds of Our Place workers and volunteers who are there to interrupt the suffering that so many are facing in our community. You help nourish hope each and every day as we turn your donations into helping hands and welcoming hearts. Please join us in giving the gift of hope for 2023. Please donate now!*



# Celebrate #GIVING TUESDAY

Join us this **GivingTuesday, November 28**, for the world's largest generosity movement. Everyone has something to give and every act of generosity counts.

At Our Place this GivingTuesday, we're beginning to prepare a very long shopping list for over 450 residents at our three housing sites, our New Roads therapeutic recovery community, and JAYMAC Place, our home for recovering men. Our goal is to make Christmas a very special time for each person as best we can, despite the challenges they are facing. For many, the community they find at Our Place is the only sense

of family they will have this holiday season, and throughout the year.

"Christmas is often a really difficult time for our residents," says Leah Young, Director of Housing and Shelters at Our Place. "Sometimes it's hard for some folks because it brings up bad memories and there's not a lot of family they're connected with. So having that little piece of Christmas with us at Our Place, to be honest, can mean the world to them."

For GivingTuesday, we're asking you to help us bring light and joy to our

residents this Christmas by helping us to tick all the items off that long shopping list. This year your donations will go towards Christmas gifts for every single person in our housing sites, as well as festive activities and events where they can share the holidays together.

"We want to individualize each resident so there's something special for them on that Christmas morning when there's not usually a lot," adds Leah. "Each site will be a bit different, where they might get together and exchange gifts, or have a Christmas party, or make Christmas cards together, or decorate gingerbread

houses. And we always have a Christmas dinner for folks. It's important and it means a lot."

You can help make sure that those less fortunate in our community have a piece of the holiday season too by donating to Our Place this GivingTuesday. The smiles you will be giving may be the best gift you receive this year.

To make a donation, please visit [ourplacesociety.com/givingtuesday](https://ourplacesociety.com/givingtuesday) or call 250-940-5060.





CBC Radio & Our Place present  
A dramatic reading of Charles Dickens' Classic Tale

# A Christmas Carol

Friday, Dec. 8, 2023

7:00pm Live Event

First Met United Church

932 Balmoral Rd, Victoria

Tickets: \$15.<sup>00</sup> individual  
\$35.<sup>00</sup> family

Featuring:  
CBC Personalities  
Reach Choir  
Surprise Guests

Feel the  
Christmas Spirit  
and give back  
in service to our  
community

Buy tickets:  
[ourplacesociety.com/christmascarol](https://ourplacesociety.com/christmascarol)

All proceeds to benefit Our Place Society



SCAN ME

Coldest Night is a 2km & 5km walkathon fundraiser. We walk to declare our concern for the people in our community experiencing hurt, hunger, and homelessness.



Join us on Feb 24, 2024

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