



# Urban Lights

**Y O N G E  
S T R E E T  
M I S S I O N**

**HOPE IN THE CITY SINCE 1896**

*Do you recognize Harold?\**  
Harold is a long-time member of  
our New Hope Fellowship group  
and has appeared in our media ads.

## CHANGE AT WORK:

**\$3.11 CAN LEAD TO WHOLENESS OF LIFE**

BY ANNE KEYES

### *In this issue...*

- Meet a Partner in Compassion...page 3
- Gavin's Story: When Someone Cares...page 4
- Introducing [www.ysm.ca](http://www.ysm.ca) ... page 5
- Financial Integrity at YSM...page 6

Check your pockets or change purse and carefully count out \$3.11. Hold it in your hand and ask yourself, 'What could this buy me today?' At YSM, that handful of change funds a hot meal for a hungry member of our community!

Your gifts – for example, \$37.32 to cover 12 meals – work like a pebble dropped into a pond. The ripples spread out to reach many people living on the edge. Street-affected youth receive the hospitality of a good meal every weekday at our Evergreen Centre. Disadvantaged adults, many living in rooming houses without access to a kitchen, also rely on us for nutritious meals.

**How does \$3.11 stretch into nourishment for body and soul? Here's a look into a day in the life at Yonge Street Mission.**

Community Centre cook, Elaine Chisholm, and her three volunteers are putting the finishing touches on the Seniors' lunch: potato salad, chicken, curried carrot soup and fresh fruit.

"We make everything from scratch," says Elaine, "and I always make extra so we're ready for seconds and latecomers. Last Thursday we expected a smaller lunch turnout, but over 60 turned up – and we fed them all! I livened up the stir-fry with more vegetables and the folks sure enjoyed it."

*Continued on page 2* ►►►

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"I live alone and the fellowship at the Seniors program makes YSM a second home to me," says Shirley. "We get our only full-course meals here – many of us can't afford to eat properly. I'm very fortunate to have the Mission, and not just for the good meals, for the whole place!"

"I have a bit of a budget to pay for the staples, including rice and pasta," says Elaine, "but we rely on donations. For some reason it always comes together. Donations show up on my doorstep just when I need them! The chicken for today's lunch came from generous friends at Skilcor Northbud – their meat product gifts feed a lot of people, both through our meals and the Food Bank."

Harold, a retired civil servant, arrives by GO train to help prepare and serve lunch, as he does every week.

***"It's great being part of this! I'd have signed up earlier if I'd known about the good work here."***

Harold is just one of many people who demonstrate their commitment to Yonge Street Mission by donating funds or time to our various programs. We honour our relationships with our supporters by operating with integrity in all we do.

Each dollar you give as a donor or each hour as a volunteer is part of an ongoing covenant that is built upon trust, honesty and transparency. Every gift, right down to the \$3.11 spent on a meal, fuels our commitment to carrying out our work with integrity.

**Integrity is also the state of being entire or complete. It is the wholeness of life that YSM brings to individuals in our community.**

"I find great comfort in the sense of community here at the Mission," says Fred, who has lived in our supportive

housing at Genesis Place for three years, after living in rooming houses longer than he cares to remember.

"When I first came here, someone asked, 'Can you paint?'" Now Fred does most of the painting for the Property Services Department, as well as many other maintenance tasks.

"Fred is a very gentle, patient person, and the quality of all the work he does for us – especially the painting – is so good," says Property Manager Kin Sing Sum. "It's great to have Fred with us at YSM!"

Our Youth Program encourages young people to join our Leaders in Training group. Becoming an LIT has been an important step for Alicia Santos, age 16. She says, "You could say I've grown up at the Mission: starting out in daycare, then taking part in the Children's Breakfast Club and after-school programs." Alicia and her mother have been relocated out of Regent Park, but she returns to the Mission to attend weekday youth programs, after her school day at Jarvis Collegiate.

Alicia plans to attend the University of Toronto and eventually work as a family counsellor. "The Leaders in Training Program has helped me set goals for my future, and I was placed in my first summer job through the YSM youth program. YSM really means a lot to me."



***"Working in the LIT group has taught me to be a leader and not to follow what other kids say. The most important thing is to lead yourself in the right direction!"***

Like Alicia, Fuzia\* found employment through YSM – at our Double Take store, in fact. She has gained more than job skills.

"Since you gave me a job at Double Take, my English has improved, I've learned about the culture of my new country and I have my confidence back," she says. "It has changed my life – thank you!"



***Elaine's volunteers make it possible for her to produce up to 100 meals at a sitting.***

Photo: J. Cowie

But for some youth in our city, wholeness in life is just a dream.

"My mother dropped me off at a shelter one night after pelting me with pots and pans," says Rob.\*

"After my first night in the shelter, I didn't know what to do. A lot was going on with my mom and the rest of my family and I needed a place to get a meal and just chill out. A guy told me about Evergreen so I decided to check it out. I'm glad I did," he says.

Wholeness of life is getting closer for Rob, as he works with Evergreen staff to find stable housing, get into a job training program and deal with a history of family violence.

The change in your pocket can help change a life. A meal is often the first step on a journey to wholeness. Thank you – on behalf of the whole YSM community!

\*name changed



[www.ysm.ca](http://www.ysm.ca)

Email: [info@ysm.ca](mailto:info@ysm.ca)  
 Phone: (416)929-9614  
 1-800-416-5111

**Administration:**

**DR. RICK TOBIAS**  
*President and CEO*

**KAREN BACH**  
*Mission Program Officer*

**PAUL DAVIDSON**  
*Mission Operations Officer*

**RAY MARSHALL**  
*Chief Development Officer*

**KERRY BOWSER**  
*Senior Program Director*

**MOREEN WHITE**  
*Director of Finance*

**Branches:**

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*Director of Evergreen*

**MATTHEW PARKER**  
*Lead Pastor/Director of Church at the Mission*

**CLAIRE BARCIC**  
*Director of Community Services*

**RUTH PENTINGA**  
*Director of Volunteer Resources*

**BILL RYAN**  
*Director of Staff Care*

**KATHY WEBSTER**  
*Double Take, Store Manager*

**LAURA AWOSANYA**  
*Genesis Place, Housing Manager*

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# Lend a HELPING hand

## MEET A PARTNER IN COMPASSION

*Let me introduce Joyce Schneider, faithful supporter of YSM for 23 years!*

Joyce is one of our valued Partners in Compassion, providing consistent monthly gifts that help people in need all year round. In addition, Joyce helps meet special needs as she is able. Thanks to Joyce, the tenants at Genesis Place can rest on a sturdy bench in front of their building; the youth have enjoyed using new basketball hoops in the gym; the children's program has musical instruments. These are just a few examples of Joyce's caring concern for people living with poverty who need a helping hand.

"I support the Mission because they do practical things for ordinary people whom the city doesn't care for," she explains.

When Joyce visited us one Christmas, she reported: "There was such a sense of honesty and searching for solutions for the needs at hand. YSM is truly there to be of help where help is not to be found. I so enjoyed meeting the folks there."

As well, I am proud to count Joyce Schneider as one of the founding members of the Legacy Lights Club, a group of people who have named Yonge Street Mission in their will. Thank you, Joyce, for making this city a better place today and for many years to come!

Ray Marshall, Chief Development Officer

P.S. Like Joyce, I am a Partner in Compassion and I'd love to have you join us!

For more information on becoming a Partner in Compassion or joining Legacy Lights, contact Lena Balkaran at 416-929-9614 ext. 4260 or [lbalkaran@ysm.ca](mailto:lbalkaran@ysm.ca).

### Yes, I support Yonge Street Mission!

Please use my donation:  Wherever the needs are greatest  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my donation of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  My cheque is enclosed.

Charge:  VISA  MasterCard  American Express

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me:  Information on planned giving, bequests, gifts of securities

Annual Report 2009

Information on In Memory and Milestone gifts

I would like to arrange a tour

Yonge Street Mission, 306 Gerrard Street East, Toronto ON M5A 2G7

Phone: 416-929-9614 Toll Free: 1-800-416-5111 Fax: 416-929-7204

E-mail: [donorservices@ysm.ca](mailto:donorservices@ysm.ca) Web site: [www.ysm.ca](http://www.ysm.ca)

Please make cheque payable to Yonge Street Mission. Charitable Number 11930 6181 RR0001

**Support youth in need and have fun, too!**  
 You are invited to attend two special events.

**13TH ANNUAL LOS SILVERADOS GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
**Tues. Sept. 21**

Proceeds to Evergreen Centre and TD Securities Computer Literacy Centre  
[www.lossilverados.com](http://www.lossilverados.com)

**4TH ANNUAL BRIGHT LIGHTS**  
**Wed. Oct. 27, The Carlu**

Proceeds to YSM Student Awards Program  
[www.BrightLightsEvent.com](http://www.BrightLightsEvent.com)  
 Buy tickets online or call 416-929-9614.

# WHEN SOMEONE CARES

BY  
GAVIN  
CAMPBELL JR.



Growing up without a mother was not easy for me. I left Jamaica when I was just four years old. At the time my mother whispered in my ear that I was going to Canada to visit my father for a couple of weeks. Little did I know that this visit would last 20 years.

I grew up on Jane Street in Toronto, known for its constant police presence because of the drugs and gang activity. I never wanted to live there but I had no choice.

The years at home were tough. I never spoke much to my father because he was mad all of the time and he would rather look at the negatives in life. So I decided to leave but first I called my Mom to tell her good bye and that I loved her.

I wound up going downtown to a youth shelter. The shelter system was hard, considering they kicked you out from 8:30am to 4:30pm each day.

During those eight hours that I spent walking up and down Yonge Street, I spotted a building called Evergreen. So I crossed the street and walked in.

A staff member explained to me that Evergreen is a drop-in for street-involved youth that offers a variety of services such as

an employment centre, a health and dental clinic plus showers and hot lunches and dinners.

The lunch was really welcome! I hadn't had a meal like that for four months. The next day I signed up for a computer and started working on my resume. Another staff member assisted me and within 40 minutes I had completed my resume. The staff helped me to look for housing as well. After two weeks of searching, I found a job and a place to live and I was really excited about my future.

But then I realized that Christmas was just three weeks away and I had no family or

relatives to be with for the holiday. A feeling of depression and anxiety hit me and I was just out of it for awhile. But I met with the Evergreen counsellor who helped me cope with my feelings. Then she invited me to the Evergreen Christmas dinner. I went to the dinner and had a lot of fun. The food was awesome! After that the anxiety that I had was gone.

One year later I went back to Evergreen to apply for the Connecting Youth to Work program and within two weeks I got accepted into the program. Since then I've successfully completed Part I and the Part II placement with the YSM Development Department.

So now with the grace of God and the encouragement from the staff at the Yonge Street Mission, I'm in Part III of the program, getting valuable experience and on-the-job-training in the media field.

It's special when you have people who care enough to help youth like myself. We just need a little push in life because we don't have family to turn to for guidance.

With all the help I got from YSM, I started to realize my potential and now I'm on an exciting new path in my life. It makes all the difference when someone cares!

## A NEW DAY

*As I could see it was not meant to be  
So I had to leave to avoid controversy  
All of my struggles and all of my pain  
All of my losses were more than my gains  
Never talked much, never had much to say  
Left my home to find a new way  
Found the YSM to start a new day  
With all the help that they offered me  
I'm now on a path to be all that I can be*

# Get involved: VOLUNTEER

## MENTORS

If you are over 25, a solid role model, patient, kind, positive and reliable, we may be looking for you! Mentors don't "fix"; they "journey with" their matched mentee. We ask mentors to commit to frequent contact for a minimum of one year. Please contact Angie Hocking, Mentor Facilitator at [ahocking@ysm.ca](mailto:ahocking@ysm.ca) or 416-929-9614 ext. 4284.

## VOLUNTEER GROUPS

### Annual Cabbagetown Festival

Sat., Sept. 11, 9:00am-4:00pm: Your group of 12 can help set up, assist with games for children, food for visitors, etc.

### Volunteer Appreciation Party

Wed., Sept. 15, 2:30pm-8:30pm: Your group of 12 can help us celebrate and honour our wonderful YSM volunteers. For more Volunteer Opportunities, check [www.ysm.ca](http://www.ysm.ca).

## SPECIAL NEEDS

**TTC tokens:** Your gift will help community members attend training courses, job interviews and medical appointments.

### Please help fill our shelves!

YSM's Food Bank is a lifeline of support for people facing hard times: the working poor, new immigrant families, the unemployed and seniors on fixed incomes.

### Always needed:

- canned goods, pasta, cereal and cooking oil.
- Toiletries: toothpaste, soap, shampoo and deodorant
- **Your gift of \$30 will buy enough dairy, eggs and fresh produce for a family of five for a week!**

As each week goes on, the shelves get emptier and Food Bank volunteers have to reduce amounts given to each client. Can you or your group hold a food drive or make a cash donation?

**Your generous gifts meet critical needs – thank you!**

For more information, contact Anne Keyes at 416-929-9614, ext. 4247 or [akeyes@ysm.ca](mailto:akeyes@ysm.ca).



**YSM's new website has arrived**

The **YONGE STREET MISSION** family is pleased to announce the birth of a new online home at [www.ysm.ca](http://www.ysm.ca). We hope you agree that our new online community reflects the YSM values of love, creativity, integrity, dignity, justice, peace and gratitude.

Twelve months of research, preparation and long hours of development went into the creation of the website. It is with deep gratitude we thank John Cowie of [eyetoeyedesign.ca](http://eyetoeyedesign.ca) for capturing the essence of our community in photos. We also thank the countless people at Russ Reid who helped bring our vision to life.

Take a moment to visit us at [www.ysm.ca](http://www.ysm.ca), check out the blog and videos and join us on Facebook and Twitter.

**Thank you** for your support and patience while we brought this new online community to life. *We look forward to hearing what you think!*

>>> [Visit ysm.ca now!](http://www.ysm.ca)

## SERVICE UPDATE

### OUR SERVICE TO PEOPLE IN NEED:

(number of visits in the first six months of our 2009-10 fiscal year)

COMMUNITY SERVICES		EVERGREEN	
Food Bank	21,351	Meals and Drop In	35,861
Computer labs	6,121	Health Centre	5,104
Meals and other programs	27,654	Employment Resource Centre	9,086

*Look for full annual YSM program attendance in the Fall issue of Urban Lights. Thank you for making it all possible!*



# FACES OF YSM

BY KATHLEEN MAGLADRY



"I get up every day happy to come to work at YSM," says Director of Finance Moreen White. "I think it is because the YSM values line up with my own personal values."

Moreen attained her first professional accounting designation from the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) in England and her second from the Certified General Accountants (CGA) when she came to Canada. She works with a team of three to ensure that YSM has the external procedures and internal controls necessary to be fully transparent to our donors, our community and others with an interest in the financial operations of the Mission.

"Transparency is so important in finance," she says. "Our entire operation, including our records, must stand up to the scrutiny of any third party. We have to show that we stewarded our revenue carefully and spent it wisely."

Moreen lists some of the practices and systems YSM has in place to ensure financial integrity.

- Annual external audit by KPMG. "So far, we have passed with flying colours."
- Oversight by the Canadian Council of Christian Charities. "One of the mandates of this organization is to ensure its members operate with the highest standards of integrity. YSM has received the CCCC Seal of Accountability for many years now."
- Annual Registered Charity form for Canada Revenue Agency. "This is public information on the CRA website."
- Audits and financial reviews by funders, including federal and provincial governments and the City of Toronto.
- Oversight from the YSM Board of Directors and Audit Finance Committee.
- Budget Control system. "Each program area follows an annual budget that has been approved by their department and the YSM Board of Directors. We compare plan to actual every month and departments are accountable for their spending."

"Integrity to me is about who you are. It will be demonstrated in everything you do," says Moreen. "For example, when we say that \$3.11 is the cost of a meal, we have done the calculation based on our financial records."

"On a personal level, I feel that I am accountable not only to YSM but also to God. Nothing but the highest level of integrity is acceptable."

"After nine years at YSM, I still find joy in my work!"

**MOREEN WHITE**  
FCCA, CGA

## INTEGRITY AT WORK

*In this issue, Urban Lights highlights the Mission's core value of Integrity.*

### YONGE STREET MISSION CORE VALUES

*As a Christian faith community we strive to consistently demonstrate our core values.*

**Love:** of God and love for neighbour is foundational to all we do

**Creativity:** We embrace the creative spark in the expression of our calling

**Integrity: We strive for transparency and truth in who we are, what we say and how we behave**

**Dignity:** We value people as unique individuals and respect and care for all of creation

**Justice:** We recognize the rights of all for inclusion, and advocate for and with those living with injustice

**Gratitude:** We radiate joy and appreciation for all of God's gifts and celebrate the privilege of serving

**Peace:** We seek harmony with God, wholeness in relationships and health for our city.



You helped us provide 11 weeks of day camp for children and a total of seven overnight camps for all ages. You responded to our appeals for camp funds and for essential supplies like sunscreen. Because of your generous gifts, over 500 people had a special holiday this summer. Thank you for spreading the joy!





## DOUBLE TAKE STORE GETS NEW STORAGE BUILDING

After celebrating ten years in operation, Double Take has a much-needed storage building, thanks to the amazing generosity of some YSM donors. This group of special friends provided gifts matching the government's Infrastructure Stimulus Fund grant.

The next phase of the project involves renovation of program space in the 310 Centre and the Community Centre

and is expected to be completed this fall – if we receive sufficient donations toward it.

To take advantage of this opportunity to “double” your gift, please contact Paul Davidson, Mission Operations Officer and overseer of the project, at 416-355-3546.

## NEW SPACE OPENS IN ST. JAMES TOWN

After two years the first YSM satellite location in St. James Town has its own space!

The street-level premises in a condo building at 225 Wellesley St. East opened at the end of June, in time to provide space for summer programs such as Future Leaders and Art for Girls. The SJT Youth Council, entering its third dynamic year, has a place to meet and call its own.

*“We are thrilled to have a permanent location in the neighbourhood,”* says Karen Bach, Mission Program Officer. *“Our staff of three have already been a catalyst for change in St. James Town. Wonderful things lie ahead for the community!”*

## GRADS YOUNG AND OLD

Students from age 3 to 83 accepted Certificates of Recognition, as they graduated recently from computer classes in MS Word, Internet Basics, Digital Storytelling and more.

About 250 adults were signed up for courses last year and a luncheon was held in their honour in June.

*“I never thought I would be coming to computer class and learning all these programs. I am so proud of myself!”* said Angela, a graduate who has struggled with disability and addiction issues.

At the other end of the age spectrum, 17 children from our daycare, aged 3 to 5, took graduation in stride. *“I know all the ABCs on this computer,”* stated one young participant.

In addition to our adult graduates and ones in regular programs like Daycare or Seniors, the TD Securities Computer Literacy Centre graduated 50 children from the Introductory course last term, presenting each with a re-conditioned computer to take home.

*“My children want to know how to use the computer because they have to know it for school. These classes prepare them for the future,”* stated a mother of three.

Computer labs continue to be well-used through the summer with six weeks of Media Day Camp for Grades 4 to 8 and special workshops in information technology for girls ages 6 to 13.

## CONGRATULATIONS YSM GRADUATES!





# THE BACK PAGE

By: Dr. Rick Tobias, YSM President and CEO

## Three Promises and a Handshake Deal

“What just happened?”

I'd just been broadsided by our building committee. They completely derailed my nomination of a lead contractor for construction of our computer lab and clothing store. I had proposed a well-known developer who was also a Mission supporter.

John, an engineer and long-time friend said, “Rick, you can use him if you want but I will need to step away from the committee.” Immediately, the vice-chair agreed. Meanwhile, our architect was blunt: “I will never work with that man again!”

It took me a few minutes to get my bearings. When I asked why, the only answer I got was, “If you can't say something good . . . .”

What was clear was that the people in front of me were looking out for the good of the Mission – and me – so they resisted me.

\* \* \* \* \*

Five years later we were constructing a new front and expanded space for our Community Centre. We were meeting to start tendering. I announced I had already done a deal with Vic Priestly for excavation and demolition.

A committee member asked if I had a written quotation. I didn't.

“How do you know he will honour the quote?”

“We shook hands,” I replied.

Which is enough with Vic. He loves YSM. He always gives us his best price. In fact I'm not convinced that he has ever made a penny from YSM. And he always keeps his promises, and not just to us.

\* \* \* \* \*

Twenty-five years ago, I'd just become the Executive Director. Fresh from directing Evergreen, our street ministry, I was greatly over-confident. Yet I actually knew little about how to direct the Mission through the management and financial issues coming at us. I could not even read a financial statement; I knew ours were a mess, but only because Board members told me.

*Integrity is an anchor in an age of relativism and drift.*

What to do? The answer was a person – John Fenton. John was a regular at the Mission's annual meetings, always asking hard questions for which we seldom seemed to have satisfactory answers. “You need John back on the Board,” someone suggested.

John rejoined the Board and taught me how to bring financial stability to the Mission. Before he agreed to serve, he

asked me for three commitments: to get YSM out of debt, to balance the books and to operate with the highest level of integrity of any charity in Canada. “Great!” I said, hardly recognizing the importance of those three promises for our future.

\* \* \* \* \*

Those anecdotes are the roots of listing integrity among our core values. Integrity is an anchor in an age of relativism and drift. John Fenton embodies it. Vic Priestly demonstrates it daily. Our committees and board members continue to act out of convictions about what is right and good.

So many years ago we began deliberately striving for integrity in how our programs deal with people in communities, in our finances, and in dealings with our supporters. Have we arrived? Probably not. We aspire to higher ground.

Yet today YSM can stand up under very close scrutiny. I am tremendously grateful that Board and committee members act on what's good for the Mission, that staff are vigilant on behalf of the people we serve, that John Fenton's questions now get answers, and that people of integrity will do business with us, based on a handshake.