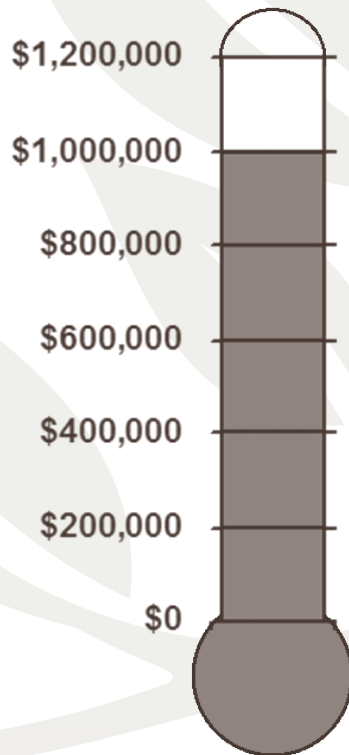


"Growing Home for Shalom" Capital Update



Thanks to the generous gifts from Shalom's supporters, **\$1,000,000** have been pledged and raised to date for "A Growing Home for Shalom."

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Together we celebrate "A Growing Home for Shalom"



Staff in front of the expanded Shalom. Front Row (L-R): Jeni Poetzsch, Cynthia Cober, Wanda Wagler-Martin, Jeanne Kelly, Paula Quarrie, Melody LeClair; Back Row (L-R): Steven Reesor Rempel, Neil Thomas, Brian Laverty, Susan Schwartzentruber, Karen Huehn, Rod Miller; Missing: Bethany Nightingale.

Welcome back to Shalom! The seasons of planning, anticipation, and construction have passed, and the work of Shalom counselling has moved back into a beautiful, welcoming and hope filled space at 9 Avondale Ave. S. in Waterloo.

Staff are busy adapting to their new office spaces, adding personal touches, and creating the warm, inviting environment that is Shalom.

We are grateful for the many hands that played a role in transforming Shalom, many more than we can name. The generosity and commitment of the community in supporting "A Growing Home for Shalom" has provided an expanded space to experience healing and growth.

Join Us at Our Open House

As the community of support and care that surrounds Shalom, we look forward to sharing our new home with you at an open house on Thursday, December 10, from 4 – 7 p.m. This is an opportunity for you to meet the staff of Shalom, see where we work, and help us to dedicate this new space for Shalom's ongoing work.

Shalom's expanded home ➤



Moving Back Into 9 Avondale



Thank you to Erb Street Mennonite Church!

In the midst of the excitement of moving from Erb Street Mennonite Church back into 9 Avondale, we would like to thank Erb Street Mennonite Church for being such gracious hosts during the past 7 months. The accommodations and support that Erb Street provided to Shalom allowed us to continue providing services throughout the construction process.

Counselling Groups at Shalom, Growing Opportunities

The new spaces at Shalom have provided many opportunities for growth and creativity. This is demonstrated most notably in the expansion of Shalom's group meeting room.

The group meeting room at Shalom will serve many purposes, from meetings and gatherings to counselling groups. A useful multi-purpose space is a resource that Shalom is blessed to have.

One of the most exciting opportunities presented by the group meeting room is the ability to hold larger counselling groups in Shalom's space. In addition to

Shalom's provision of individual, couple, and family counselling, the offering of counselling groups is an important service at Shalom.

Counselling groups at Shalom provide a unique atmosphere for learning, sharing and growing in a safe and supportive environment.

Shalom currently offers four Clergy Support and Consultation groups, and a Suicide Bereavement group. These groups are so popular that they are at capacity.

Historically, Shalom was very limited in the number of people who could attend a group due to the size of our group meeting space. These space limitations prevented Shalom from creatively exploring how group counselling offerings could be a more integrated part of Shalom's services. With our move back into the renovated space, staff at Shalom are able to dream about new groups that could be offered.



◀ Shalom's new group meeting room is ready to use.

Living With “Why?”: Support After a Suicide Loss

By Susan Schwartzentruber, MSW, RSW

Death by suicide continues to be a significant mental health issue in the Waterloo Region and across Canada. A recent article in the Waterloo Region Record indicated that 66 people died by suicide in 2013, a 57 percent increase over the previous six years. Nationally, in 2011, 3728 Canadians died by suicide, an average of 10 people per day. These numbers highlight the unfortunate reality that suicide impacts many people locally and nationally.

Since 1996, Dena Moitoso from People Needing People Bereavement Counselling, provided this support group to the community. The early participants guided the program and created a new name for the group to define its purpose. Dena shares the following:

They chose “Why?...” because they wanted a safe space to ask the question as many times as they needed until they did not need to ask it as much. Fully aware that the question may never be answered, it was the process of questioning that was most important. A strong element of education in the agenda allowed for the question to have some organization to it, so the topics were chosen as a vehicle to explore deeper the complexity to the question ‘why?’

Over the course of time, research and science have been integrated in the program. Today, this ‘trauma informed’ group process, provides an opportunity to soften the ‘noise’ of the WHY, so that individuals can move towards honouring their grief and in turn honouring their relationship with those who they carry in their hearts.

This past year, Shalom was one of the local counselling agencies who piloted and facilitated the “Why? Support After A Suicide Loss” group. Dena trained facilitators from four different agencies with the curriculum and she provides ongoing consultation and support. Funding for this program is provided by the Local Health Integration Network through a partnership with the Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council.

Shalom’s first group met in the winter of 2015 with 11 participants. Due to space restraints, we relocated to an adequate space at Erb Street Mennonite Church.

We are in the midst of facilitating a second group ses-



The “Why? Support After a Suicide Loss” group provides a community of care in the midst of what is too often an isolating time.

sion which started in October with 12 participants, and are pleased to be able to use Shalom’s beautiful and spacious group room for the ongoing group sessions.

“Why? Support After a Suicide Loss” is a 9 week group specifically designed for individuals who are facing the unique challenges of a traumatic grief after a family member or friend has died by suicide. A loss after suicide is considered complicated grief, and as such, it is more severe and longer lasting. These groups not only provide a therapeutic experience, but also provide an opportunity for individuals to connect with others in a supportive manner.

A predominant feature that loved ones struggle with is facing the ongoing stigma of losing their loved one by suicide. The stigma impacts how or who they talk to and they often feel isolated in their grief process. Feelings of guilt and/or shock also complicates their grief. It is unfortunate that stigma surrounding suicide continues to be present, especially in light of the prevalence of death by suicide in the Waterloo Region and across the country.

The “Why? Support After Suicide” group meets a significant need for those who feel confused, hurt and isolated in the wake of the trauma of suicide. Group participants commented on their experience of support and connectedness with each other. We hope that Shalom can continue to provide a space and place of healing and peace as we walk with these individuals.

Seedlings

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Helping People Grow Toward

Peace and Wholeness

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United Way
SERVING KITCHENER-WATERLOO
And the Townships of Wellesley, Wilmot and Woodwich

Board Changes

Shalom welcomes the following individuals who have joined the Board to serve as Directors.



Henry Hildebrand has made a life long commitment to helping others, including his years in corporate employment, work with Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite World Conference, church and community boards and committees, and his present ownership of St. Jacobs Place.



Chris is an entrepreneurial pastor in the K-W community who ministers through a new non-profit he co-founded called Pastors in Exile. He works at Conrad Grebel University College in their Student Services department and is pursuing his MA in Theology: Spirituality & Psychotherapy at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary.

Shalom would also like to thank Kara Carter for her time serving on the Board, and we wish her well as she pursues new endeavours.

Our Perspective

As a faith-based agency we honour and respect the diversity of persons, backgrounds and beliefs within our community. As Christian professionals, Shalom counsellors are receptive to conversations of faith and spirituality when initiated by the client in the counselling process.

You Can Help

Shalom relies on the financial support of our community to provide counselling subsidies to ensure that counselling is accessible to all, regardless of income. This mutual aid, supporting others in a time of need, is important to enact Shalom's mission, "helping people grow towards peace and wholeness."

If you are interested in donating to the ongoing work of Shalom Counselling, you can donate in the following ways:

Cheque

Cheques can be made payable to:
Shalom Counselling Services Inc.

Credit Card

Credit card donations can be made online or by phone:
www.shalomcounselling.org
(519) 886-9690

Legacy Gifts

Legacy gifts (estates and wills) can be made through the Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC)