



TOGETHER

making a difference



CENTRE OF HOPE
Abbotsford & Mission

HOPE – what a word – what an experience!

A message from Major Ruth Gillingham

Walking to work these days I am filled with hope as I see buds on the trees, new life bursting forth from the ground creating a carpet of cascading colours. I love spring because it somehow renews hope within me as I see new life emerging from what seems beleaguered and dead. Hope is a now word – we all need hope right now – whatever the circumstance of our lives. As I was musing about hope my thoughts turned to the Centre of Hope - a community of people who work together 24/7/365 with the single purpose of giving hope today – right now.

In these turbulent times of political and economic instability, The Salvation Army remains steadfast in its mission “Giving Hope Today,” offering unwavering support to families and individuals facing adversity. As a sanctuary for those in need, we provide tools to those overcoming life’s hurdles. The Centre of Hope has become a pillar of strength, providing not only essential services but also a compassionate environment where people can rebuild their lives. Through its daily efforts, it ensures that hope, compassion and support are always available to those struggling in these uncertain times.

The Centre offers a range of programs designed to meet the immediate and long-term needs of the community. For families grappling with food insecurity, the Centre provides meals through its food bank and community kitchen, ensuring that no one goes hungry. For individuals struggling with mental health, addiction, or homelessness, the Centre offers support services and a safe space to heal. Through its emergency shelter and housing programs, people have a place to stay while they work toward stability.

What sets the Centre apart is its holistic approach to care. In addition to addressing physical needs, it also focuses on emotional and spiritual well-being. The Centre’s team of dedicated staff and volunteers go beyond simply providing resources—they listen, offer counsel, and walk alongside those they serve – they offer hope – a resurrection kind of hope.

I love that there’s a Centre of Hope in the community of Abbotsford. If you’re lacking hope these days, come by and spend some time with us and see hope in action.



150
students given backpacks and supplies



91,230
nutritious meals served



10
Next Step residents graduated



3,821
neighbours served via outreach



120
families received gifts via the Angel Tree



630
emergency hampers distributed



2,295
connections in chaplaincy



13,140
nights off the street in the shelter



51
kids attended Summer Camp



1,436
visits to the Medical Clinic



75
clients into stable housing, detox/recovery programs



3,000
snacks for local students



A big congratulations to Wolseley and James for recently completing the Pathway of Hope program and taking that next step in their recovery journey.



We’re honoured to get to play a small part in the stories of each person who come through our doors seeking support and a helping hand.

2024 Stats



The Salvation Army Centre of Hope
34081 Gladys Ave, Abbotsford, BC
CRA 107951618 RR 0487
604.852.9306 | centreofhope.net

Find us on social media at either
[@salvationarmyabbotsford](https://www.instagram.com/salvationarmyabbotsford), or by searching:
“The Salvation Army Centre of Hope - Abbotsford”



JON'S STORY IS ONE OF HOPE AND RESTORATION, AGAINST ALL ODDS



This is Jon. Like too many in our community, at one point in his life, Jon found himself trapped in addiction, and living on the streets. For years, he and his girlfriend Sierra, survived in a tent, relying on local resources like The Salvation Army here in Abbotsford, visiting The Centre of Hope pretty much every day for lunch.

Then, one fateful day, everything changed when Angela, our nurse, told them that they were pregnant. Jon says the reality of bringing a child into homelessness and addiction was the most terrifying thing he'd ever experienced, but that it was the catalyst they needed. They were determined to keep their baby and turn their lives around. But even though they searched far and wide, they couldn't find a facility that would allow them to stay together as a family.

That's when some of our team - Barbara, Cindy, and others here at The Salvation Army stepped in to help. They visited Jon and his girlfriend in "the bush by the train tracks", bringing food, offering support, advocating for this young family, and eventually finding a recovery program that would accept them. Sierra entered treatment first at eight months pregnant, ensuring their baby would be born free of addiction. Jon followed soon after, having faced the immense challenge of getting clean while still on the streets.

Today, Jon and his family are clean and sober, with a home, a job, and a bright future. Jon works with us here at The Salvation Army—giving back to the very place that he says "saved his family". That son is now almost 3, full of life and curiosity, and he visits Dad often at work, and even calls that same Barbara who visited them in the bush: "Auntie Barbara".

Jon says: "At many points in my life, I had accepted the fact that I was going to die out on the streets, or to drug addiction, but that's not the case. And although it's hard, it doesn't have to be the case for anyone. And if I could show even one person it's possible, then that's all I need."

***** Jon is receiving this year's Hero for Hope Award, at our 3rd Annual Hope in the Valley Luncheon, on April 23rd, 2025. We've recorded his story, and we're so honoured to present it to those who join us that day. Tickets are available now at centreofhope.net, or by calling 604.852.9305 -- All proceeds go to bring hope to people like Jon, right here in Abbotsford and Mission.**

We simply could not do what we do without the dedication of our volunteers.



Our volunteers are dedicated, committed and faithful. We are incredibly proud that 10 of our volunteers have been with us for over 15 years, 7 for 10-15 years, and 5 for 5-9 years. That's true dedication! **Our volunteers are our heroes!**

Thank you for being part of our "volunteer army", changing lives every day, one person at a time. We are deeply grateful for you!

— Sylvia Antonescu, Volunteer Coordinator

To find out how **YOU** can volunteer and make a positive impact in your community, please visit: centreofhope.net/volunteer

William Booth and his wife Catherine founded The Salvation Army as a volunteer movement, originally calling it the "Volunteer Army".

Today, we are fortunate to have 60 regular volunteers who assist in the thrift store, meal centre, cafe, shelter and EDS team. In 2024 alone, our regular volunteers contributed over 11,000 hours, with an additional 800 hours in our Christmas Kettle Campaign.

YOU ARE OUR HEROES



BEHIND THE SHIELD

National Volunteer Week
April 27th - May 4th, 2025