



2023
MID YEAR
UPDATE



KSM

Kerr Street Mission

Oakville's Mission of Hope

A special community. A special place!

I have said many times and to many people that “Kerr Street Mission is the community caring for the community.” This year, we have continually been reminded of the truth of the statement. To our community of donors – we are so thankful to you. Your support and commitment to helping others continues to inspire us. To our community of volunteers – we don’t know what we would do without you. To those who come each week, sometimes more than once, and the others who have volunteered with a group – you are a gift. Thank you! And finally, to the community of staff – I believe “to do great things, we need great people.” Well, our staff are great people. Every day, there are examples of them displaying kindness, compassion and grace. It is a wonderful blessing for me to work with a group of people who are so committed to loving their neighbours and are always willing to put in extra time and effort to help the people they serve, and serve with. Thank you to all for being part of our community and making Kerr Street Mission a special place.

Gary O'Neill, Executive Director

Over the past year, I have been humbled to witness the way our team's dedication and the generosity of our donors have combined to serve our client families and make a positive difference in their lives. Together, we have built a strong sense of community, and I have seen God's hand leading us in everything we do.

Komal Daniel, Financial Controller

Over the past year, we have seen the needs in our community continue to grow, not just for food but in all areas of life. We have been serving between 950 to 1000+ people each week in our food market, and the Neighbour Care Network is caring for 33 clients/families. We are working to free clients/families from \$1.3 million in debt that they cannot manage. We have an ever-growing Child and Youth program. This summer we provided eight weeks of summer camp with 120 Children and youth attending each week - and there was a long waiting list. God has been so faithful. I am thankful for His guidance and leadership, as well as the provision of resources, as we work to ensure we are offering quality programming and quality food.

Callum McGeorge, Director of Operations



Kerr Street Mission's Senior Management Team (left to right)
Callum McGeorge, Gary O'Neill and Komal Daniel

Financial Update

Entering 2023, we faced significant financial uncertainty. How would rising costs affect our budget? What impact would this have on those needing our help? And would market uncertainties affect donors' ability to support the community? We are pleased to report that we managed expenses carefully to offset a small revenue shortfall (approximately 10% less than our projected budget). Our staff have done a tremendous job. Not only were they able to maintain the quality of our programs and services and provide for the new clients (approximately 600 new clients registered in 2023), they have also made adjustments and changes that have resulted in improvements to programs and process across the organization. Thank you for your generous support in this first half of 2023!



FAMILY SERVICES

We have the privilege of coming alongside and caring for individuals and families struggling in different circumstances. Every family is unique, and the help and support they require is unique. Our Family Services team focuses on getting to know each family, learning about their situation, and connecting them to the appropriate programs, services and supports to help them. Along the way, encouragement, guidance, advocacy and/or benevolent gifts are required to make progress and improve outcomes. There is rarely a simple path our staff and volunteers can follow to help KSM clients.

Albeit rewarding, it is a challenging task to help our clients through hardship to an improved quality of life. The transformative stories we've witnessed over the past year not only give us reason to rejoice but also inspire us to continue our work:

- The single mom living in a precarious housing situation was able to get stable and safe housing for her and her girls.
- The senior gentleman was able to get new dentures after 28 years.
- The Ukrainian families that have settled into the community are thriving because of all the support and services the community has made available.
- The senior, after incredible help from a volunteer, was able to get a significant retroactive and ongoing monthly pension payment from the UK. This not only helps him pay off the debt he could not manage, but it will also provide enough to cover his monthly expenses moving forward. In his words, "This is life-changing!"

Thank you to all of the donors and volunteers who have contributed so that we can come alongside and provide the attention and care our clients need.

Bola's Journey to Home Ownership

The purpose of Kerr Street Mission lies not just in providing resources but in guiding our community towards their dreams. It's akin to teaching someone to ride a bike – once they grasp the basics, with persistence, they chart their own path.

Bola, along with her husband Paul and three children, came to us with dreams limited by financial constraints and challenges of adapting to life in Oakville. With no one to care for their children, Bola couldn't pursue work or further her education. KSM stepped in, enrolling the children in our programs, freeing Bola to chase her dreams. Through guidance, resources, and unwavering support, we watched Bola's confidence grow. And though she eventually stopped coming to KSM, we later rejoiced upon hearing she'd achieved her dream of home ownership.

Such transformations underscore our mission. KSM provides essential support, be it through our Food Market or children's programs, ensuring every family we support strides towards security and stability.



We are excited to report that our new Kids Club program was a GREAT success! Last year, we boldly decided to change the after-school program to a new format. The decision came after observing the difference in the kids' engagement levels and behaviour during summer programming versus the school year. We concluded that kids thrive when offered a variety of activities and additional support. The Kids Club format allowed us to provide more activities, new experiences, and skill development. It also created more opportunities for involvement and leadership development for the kids as they age.

This past year, through partnerships with other program providers, we offered a rich array of experiences, that the kids would not have had without our collective provision:

- Taekwondo (Thank you Horizon Taekwondo)
- Robotics (Thank you, Oakville Community FIRST Robotics team)
- Dance and Drama (Thank you, Duran House)
- Baking and Cooking (Thank you, Arthouse)
- Stop Gap Animation (Thank you, Ross – our student placement from Sheridan College)
- Basketball (Thank you, Jr NBA and Jumpstart, for sponsoring the program)



We were also able to offer additional development and support through the involvement of other volunteers and partners:

- Educational program (Thank you, Kumon, and Louise and David, for sponsoring the program)
- Tutoring (Thank you to our volunteer teachers for being available to these students)
- Entrepreneurship (Thank you to Tafari for helping with the Kerr Street Wear program and for the use of your print screening equipment)

With more activities, greater partnerships, and a focus on multi-faceted development, we've turned the Kids Club into a special place where kids don't just grow, they thrive! A heartfelt thanks to all our community partners and volunteers for making this not just a program, but a launchpad for our next generation of leaders.



Making memories for a **lifetime** at KSM Summer Camp

Getting involved with Kerr Street Mission has been life-changing for me and it all started when I signed up to be a LIT in 2021. I found myself caring so much for the campers, counsellors and program and after the first week, I signed up for as many weeks as possible. KSM Summer Camp allowed me to use my strengths, make meaningful connections and learn from mistakes. I knew I wanted to be a camp counsellor the following year and after my first year as a counsellor, I truly felt like a leader - it felt like I was on a path of growth, that brought together my personal and academic interests in social justice and public policy, which I am exploring in university. This year, when I saw KSM was hiring for a Camp Coordinator, I knew what I wanted to do with the program and luckily my leaders believed in me as well. I owe so much to KSM and my leaders here. The lessons I have learned, and the confidence they have brought out of me are something I could never repay. From the bottom of my heart thank you.

- Anjali Cudjoe, Summer Camp Staff



We ran **8** weeks of camp

Each week we had:

90 Children aged 5-10

35 Youth aged 11-14

15 Leaders in Training (high school students)

& **24** AMAZING Staff

Thank you!

When we began preparing for summer programming this year, we knew that we would need more support from the community. We hoped and prayed that our community would step up to the challenge. And you did! Your generosity helped us reach our goal of raising \$200,000! Your love, compassion, and generosity gave 300+ beautiful children the opportunity to participate in all the fun, excitement, and joy of summer camp. Every year we have seen the positive impact on the social, emotional and physical development of kids through our summer programming. Thank you for making it possible again this year!



FOOD SERVICES

In the last five months, we've seen a surprising surge—over 200 additional people per week seeking our food services. We wonder, will this trend continue? The implications are enormous! Our Food Service Team has had to be creative and resourceful to meet this rising demand. They've expanded market times, sourced additional food, and enlisted extra volunteers to provide a consistent and dependable supply to the clients.

There has also been planning and preparation for the future. Our team is committed to making the Food Services Department a transformative experience for everyone involved—clients, volunteers, and students alike. This year, our focus on "the experience" has led to well-received improvements based on community feedback.

Most noteworthy, is our effort to make our student co-op program the best it can be. In the past, students were limited to manual work required to keep the market functioning. Now, our students take on tasks in administration and event planning, more aligned with their interests and strengths. This helps us increase our capacity and, more importantly, serves as a training ground for the next generation of community leaders.

Despite these advancements, we're nearly at capacity. The need for help is still growing, and we're determined never to turn anyone away. Your continued generosity is not just a donation; it's a lifeline for those who count on us, and it fuels the innovative solutions that make Kerr Street Mission a special place. Thank you for being a crucial part of this journey.



Kerr Street Mission's Food Services Team



AT AT GLANCE...



choose
FRESH

COMMUNITY
DELIVERY



2,400+ people will benefit from KSM's Food Programming in the next 12 months



Our market is open **10** times each week to ensure ALL who are in need have access.

75% of what is offered in our market is fresh food!



FOOD DONATIONS

FROM JANUARY - JULY 2023

19 organizations have done food drives with us

31 market shelves have been "adopted"


**Adopt
a Shelf**

LEARN MORE!



We have team of

143
AMAZING
VOLUNTEERS
who help with food services every week!



Christmas Wonders AND BEYOND

As the holiday season approaches, we're reminded that many in our Oakville community are struggling. If you're thinking about how to make an impact, consider supporting our upcoming "Christmas Wonders and Beyond" program. It's more than a donation—it's a gift of hope and joy for families who find the season challenging. Your generosity directly supports our neighbours in need, ensuring everyone can experience a bit of Christmas magic.

Thank you for your continued support.



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