



**April 2022**

Dear Friends,

I am grateful for spring after a cold winter! Spring is a time for new growth, and we are certainly experiencing that at Restorations.

Eight years ago, Restorations grew out of the unified passion of a small group of individuals committed to the work of opening a home and journeying alongside those overcoming trauma from human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. I was part of this group and on the Board of Directors until they asked me a few years later if I would consider becoming Restorations' first Executive Director.

[A lot has happened](#) since then. As we've been working to open Nancy's House, we've also grown to include a thriving [Survivor-led Peer Support program](#). And even as much of my efforts have been focused on preparing for our first residents to join us later this season, it still feels so surreal that our Restorations community has grown so significantly to include churches, supporters, and encouragers from across Canada and the United States.

This month, our new Program Manager started. Deborah is passionate about the work she does, encouraging individuals to gain assets that can further their journey and ensure their quality of life. She believes in providing a home for those most vulnerable shelters not just their bodies, but their hearts and souls. Hiring Deborah is one of the last major steps we need to take before we can open Nancy's House later this spring.



Since returning, I have been connected with several supporting churches. My in-person connection and traveling have still been limited because of COVID-19, but in February I preached at Westdale Reformed Church, an RCA church located in the same region as Restorations and where I live. This was a special experience for me because I was baptized and a professing member of Westdale Reformed for many of my formative years. I preached to congregants who made their vows during my baptism and profession of faith, taught me Sunday school, allowed me to babysit their children, contributed to my faith formation, and fostered my heart for justice and people.



*Would you like to receive these updates digitally? Please email Kelli at [kgilmore@rca.org](mailto:kgilmore@rca.org) to be added to the email list. You will receive more timely updates from the missionary you support and help us be good stewards of our resources.*

I have been dedicating more time to exploring what *ethical storytelling* means and the impact it has on those whose voices we amplify, Restorations as we communicate our work, and people who want to learn more about the impact human trafficking has on people. Human trafficking, like many human rights issues, is often sensationalized or explained in ways that do not benefit victims and survivors. (I wrote a CRCNA [Do Justice blog post](#) about this two years ago.) One of the ways we have been amplifying survivors' perspectives is through [Restorations' blog](#). We invite those engaged in our Peer Support program to write posts for our blog and financially compensate them for the time, energy, and expertise they have shared with us. In one recent blog post, ["What home means to me,"](#) Adalia shares:

*"A home is more than four walls and a roof over our head; it is an environment. It's the welcoming emotion that greets us at the entrance, similar to how Restorations greeted me when I was too afraid to take the first step into this community."*

In another post, ["What Peer Support means to me,"](#) an anonymous survivor shares:

*"We walk down different paths in life but we meet people along this journey; that doesn't happen by chance, but happens for a reason. We may not know the reason, but the one thing I do know is that I'm safe, I'm strong, I'm better than I was yesterday thanks to having peer support."*

I am so grateful for your ongoing encouragement and support. Your financial support goes a long way; it has an impact on RCA Global Mission, myself, Restorations, and the survivors we serve. Global Mission recently released [a video](#) ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnXNxS8T4-k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnXNxS8T4-k)) highlighting how they are funded and the impact of your giving. I encourage you to take a look and share it with your congregation or the group of people in your church who make decisions about supporting Global Mission and their partners.



## PRAYER

- For our growing staff team—for myself, Sascha and Michelle (Peer Advocates), Deborah (Program Manager), and Mabel (bookkeeper). Pray that together and individually we may have a positive impact on the lives of those we serve.
- For the survivors we support through our Peer Support Program.
- For our first residents coming to live at Nancy's House later this season; we don't know who they are yet, but we think of and pray for them often.
- For victims and survivors of human trafficking around the world, beloved by our Creator, that they experience hope, flourishing, and peace.
- For my family as we adjust to life looking a little different once Nancy's House is opened (I will be sharing on-call duties with other staff to respond to residents' needs as they arise!).

I look forward to providing updates again soon once Nancy's House is open!

Jennifer & family

*RCA Global Mission does not receive denominational assessments or covenant shares. We depend on the faithful generosity of churches and individuals.*