

## September 2023

Dear Friends,

Hello and “Happy New Year” to all those who embrace the season of life, work, and activities that start in September!

Here at Nancy’s House, we are approaching the fall with renewed energy and enthusiasm. In August, we experienced a flurry of staffing transitions as we said “goodbye” to a summer employee, “see you later” to a colleague who is going on maternity leave, “welcome back” to a colleague who first started Restorations’ Peer Support program in 2020 and is returning to help out during our colleague’s maternity leave, and “hello” to a new Program Manager! We had a two-week overlap where all staff were present, and we had an offsite team building and professional development day. We used the Enneagram as a tool for getting to know ourselves better and discovering how we each contribute to the Restorations team. It was a great day of team building, self-discovery, lots of laughter, and good food.



Most summers we receive a government grant that offsets the cost of hiring individuals under the age of 30. This year, Charis was an incredible addition to our team. She was responsible for connecting with the residents at Nancy’s House, and she planned summer activities that helped support physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being—including plenty of time for fun and play! She planned weekly activities for “Fun Fridays” and also facilitated weekly chats each Thursday afternoon, covering topics related to mental health and wellbeing. You can read more about these activities on our blog post [“Summer Fun at Nancy’s House.”](#)

This summer we also hosted our 2nd Annual Peer Support Retreat. We received a grant from Global Mission to help offset these costs, and we are grateful for this additional support! One of my favourite things about the

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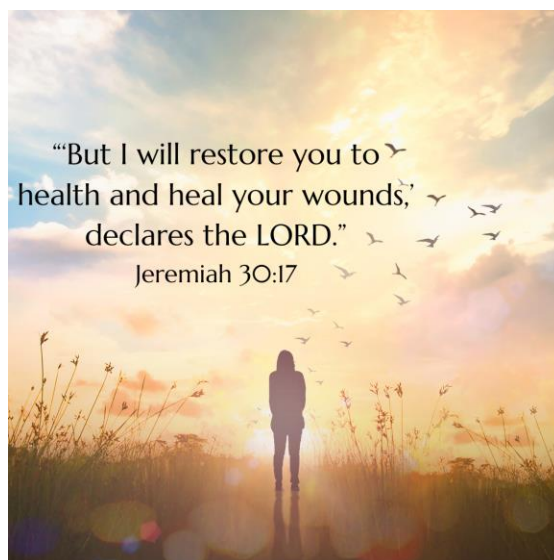


retreat is how we get to provide opportunities for survivors to participate in activities some of us might take for granted or assume that everyone has experienced. During a bonfire, one of the participants shared that she had never roasted a marshmallow before. We are grateful for the opportunity to come alongside survivors and be part of their first-time experiences! [Last year](#), kayaking was a highlight for most participants. Because of this, we prioritized finding a location this year where we could kayak again. This year when asked

about their most favourite activities and what they enjoyed most about the retreat, every single participant's response included kayaking. This really highlights the value of being able to spend time outside in nature and keeping this a priority of future retreats (which we've already begun planning for 2024!).

We are preparing to welcome a new resident this fall. In welcoming her, our house will be full, and we are grateful for the opportunity to provide safe, supportive, and specialized housing for survivors.

This fall, we celebrate 10 years of Restorations! Restorations grew out of the unified passion of a small group of individuals, to see a solution to the gap of long-term services to survivors of sexual exploitation and trafficking in Canada. In September 2013, gathered in the living room of a home, a group of people met together for the first time and committed to the work of establishing a residential program of holistic recovery and restoration, specializing in the needs faced by women exiting sexual exploitation and the trauma of sex trafficking. Struck by Jeremiah 30:17, we called ourselves *Restorations*.



What an incredible 10 years... from coming together as a group of people passionate to see a positive difference in the lives of survivors, to starting a charity, establishing the framework of what we wanted to see in a long-term housing program, starting a Survivor-Led Peer Support Program, and opening Nancy's House, where we have seen how safe, supportive, and specialized housing has made a real difference.

We are also excited to share that we have received a grant from the Community Services Recovery Fund, which is helping organizations focus on how to adapt in this season of pandemic recovery. This grant will support our project "Revitalizing Restorations' governance strength and planning for continued growth." As we approach our 10th anniversary this fall and celebrate achieving our initial goal of opening a home for survivors of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, this project will support Restorations' efforts to enter into our next phase of growth. We will be using the funds to evaluate and update our current governance policies and develop an organizational strategic plan that will focus on our efforts on how we can continue to support survivors.

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

This coming year is going to be full, exciting, and full of growth! And it wouldn't be possible without the support of individuals and churches across Canada and the United States. I am in the process of seeking additional funds to ensure that my budget is fully funded for 2024. One way to do this is to develop new relationships with churches that do not yet support my work. So if you know of a church that might be interested in the work of Restorations, please send them this Dear Friends letter! Another way to ensure that my budget is fulfilled is for existing PIM share churches to increase their support. I ask that your congregation prayerfully consider increasing your support to continue the work of serving survivors of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.



### **FAMILY LIFE**

Amy has begun grade 5, and her favourite things these days are reading books (just like me!), horseback riding, and video games. Mark has returned to his work at a nearby college to teach building renovations and carpentry. We are still in disbelief that Malcolm will start junior kindergarten next fall! Because of the busy staffing transitions this summer and because of our wild little guy, my family's summer adventures were short and local. We are fortunate that southern Ontario has so much to offer!

On behalf of everyone here at Restorations who benefits from your support, encouragement, and prayers—thank you! I look forward to providing you with more updates as we get closer to Christmas.

### **PRAYER REQUESTS**

- For the residents of Nancy's House—for this time in their lives as they work towards greater independence and achieving their goals.
- For the survivors we support through our Peer Support Program.
- For our Board of Directors and Jennifer as they lead the organization through the grant activities of reviewing our governance and developing a strategic plan.
- For Jennifer as she seeks out additional funding for her ministry.

With gratitude,  
Jennifer & family