

Christmas Events

December 4th
Christmas with the Youth

December 5th
Christmas Family Drive Throughs

December 11th
Christmas with the Young Adults

December 13th
Staff Christmas

December 18th
Christmas at The Home

A special thank you to the following churches, groups, and individuals for making Christmas bright this year!

- Vancouver Christian School - Grade 8's
- Willingdon Church Small Group
- Kingsway Foursquare Church
- The Giving Truck
- The Hau's, Kathy, Catherine, Jean, Gilbert, Maya, Lorie, Heidi, Judy, Leanne, Janet, ..and many more!



A Season of Joy



Christmas Celebrations are one of the highlights of the Inner Hope year. A Boundless mentor recently described these events as "the glue that holds the community together."

These celebrations are always a gift. They are made possible through the efforts of churches, groups, and individuals who provide everything from purchasing individualized gifts to helping with wrapping. We are always amazed by the love poured out in this season.

The Boundless Christmas Event was our first celebration this year on Friday, December 4th. There were over twenty attendees who enjoyed a full turkey dinner and Ping Pong and Foosball tournaments. Each youth received a festive pillowcase filled with toiletries and gifts. It was a blast for everyone who came!



On Sunday, we had the privilege of celebrating Christmas with the families in our community.

Over the course of the day, we visited 25 homes. Each of our families received a bundle of treats – including gifts for each of the 40 children.

A special highlight for everyone was one of our young people, who helped with drop-offs, dressed up in an inflatable snowman! This young man brought awesome energy and joyful cheer. It was wonderful to experience!

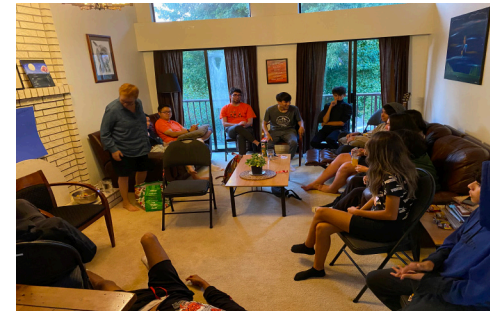
We loved connecting with so many treasured individuals and celebrating with each of them this season.

Thank you for journeying with us this December. We look forward to a new year of love and connection in 2023!

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Boundless Update



Every month Mark coordinates events for youth in the Boundless Program.

Oftentimes, he coordinates a workshop, sometimes with the help of a member of the community, to focus on a life skill that is crucial to development.

For example, in September, the workshop was on Good Sleeping Habits (an issue that many of our youth struggle with).

In October, he coordinated a Halloween event – so that the youth would have a safe and sober space in which they could celebrate with their friends.

In November, he coordinated with a local Indigenous artist to give a lesson to the youth on art. In this way the youth in our program are supported in many aspects of their lives.

Blanket Exercise



On October 22nd, John and Jenn Johnstone led 27 individuals – staff, volunteers and people from 8 different churches – through a blanket exercise.

The Kairos Blanket Exercise is a participatory learning experience that walks guests through the history of Canada and its relationship with its First Peoples. It was a time of deep learning, where we allowed ourselves the space for mourning and reflection. We also were able to realize that we were seeing the world through clouded perspectives – we were missing pieces of our history. We were able to delve into actively learning from a place of humility.

This felt like an important part not only of healing but also it enabled us to think of the future with a more wholesome perspective.

What Happened this Fall

Ride for Refuge



On October 1st, we had our very first Ride for Refuge event where we hosted the whole event – and it was a blast! Thanks to the enormous effort of 116 participants and 30 volunteers we exceeded our fundraising goals!

Ride Day was bright and sunny and we were pleased to partner with 9 churches and 4 businesses to make the day amazing.

The most important part of the day however, happened over dinner, when a grandmother from our community and our cultural mentor, John Johnstone, shared their stories. Their personal journeys of pain and healing reminded everyone at the event why we gathered – to create a good future for the youth.

Thank you to everyone who made this day great!

GO PAPERLESS

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JOIN OUR PRAYER TEAM!

Prayer is one of the most important ways you can support us. To receive our monthly prayer letter, visit www.innerhope.ca/pray

Inner Hope Youth Ministries' mission is to journey alongside youth and their families in East Vancouver; nurturing hope, belonging and growth through support, discipleship, life skills and housing.

- support nurturing community and loving youth, young adults and their families in practical ways
- discipleship providing opportunities for youth, young adults and their families to grow in their relationship with the creator
- life skills journeying alongside youth and young adults while nurturing the development of skills needed to build their futures
- housing offering a safe, stable and supportive home for youth, young adults and their children

Leaning into the Promise

“For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.’”
— Jeremiah 29:11

This is a season where we pause and take the time to reflect on the great gift that God has given to us in his Son, Jesus Christ. It is also a time where we remember that we are in a waiting period. We are living and working in a land that is still moving towards the promise of a transformed creation.

Jeremiah 29 reminds us of this. It provides us with the encouragement that, even during great suffering, steps can be taken to build a thriving community. Jeremiah 29 is a letter to Jews who had been exiled to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar. These Jews were facing extremely hard circumstances, yet the Prophet Jeremiah encouraged them to “build houses”, “plant gardens” and “seek the peace and prosperity of the city”. Then, Jeremiah shares a promise from God for those in exile: Jeremiah 29:11. This promise is the verse that Inner Hope has decided to focus on this Christmas season.

Plans to prosper you:

As we journey alongside youth and families in Vancouver, who come from many nations who have often experienced great loss, we seek to support their prosperity.

One young mom in our community is a beacon of joy in her family. This young woman comes from a lineage of residential school survivors and because of this brokenness, largely grew up away from her parents' care. Inner Hope came alongside her to support her, providing a safe place for her to spend time during her teen years, nurturing life skill development, helping her access services, and providing a listening ear.

This amazing mother worked enormously hard to make a better life for herself, her daughter and even for her niece - whom she took in out of the foster care system in 2019. This past year her efforts certainly paid off as she completed a medical office assistant course and was immediately hired at a local walk-in clinic. The income she earns will provide increased stability for her kids and open doors for their future.

Not to Harm:

Our cultural mentor, John Johnstone, led a blanket ceremony for our high school graduates in June. At this ceremony, he shared an image about how Indigenous communities

were organized in the past. It was in a great circle with children at the center. The moms and the aunts would encircle the children - to love, to cherish, and to guide them. They would then in turn be surrounded by dads, uncles, and grandpas who, as warriors, provided for and protected the children. The children were everything for the community; which made it so traumatic for families and communities, and caused irreparable damage, when the children were taken away (Residential Schools, 60's Scoop).

The Inner Hope community has experienced almost unbelievable levels of harm because of this stolen center. We see the effects of this everyday. It's in this reality that one of the youths living in The Home shared

that every adult in his extended family has struggled with addiction and he only has one adult in his family who is currently not in active addiction. It's present when we journey with our youth as they mourn family members lost to tragic deaths or navigate how to maintain connection with family members living on streets or in jail. These broken family bonds lead to increased levels of pain, fear, hypervigilance, distrust of adults, and much more.

Plans to Give you Hope:

When Inner Hope opened “The Home,” our youth and parents chose the location and helped draft the job description for our House Parents. The Home is bathed in hope. Hope for connection, for growth, for a

community that is healing and for individuals who are learning.

This year, before we opened the new Home for our community, about 20 people gathered to pray for each of the rooms - even for the garage, the yard, the bathrooms and storage spaces. These prayers echo in the home today.

Many youth are working through the pain of trauma, and yet, The Home is a place of peace, a place of community, of welcome and of joy. This year it was a space where we held a graduation celebration for one of our youths. This youth's grandmother had pulled herself off the streets 18 years ago to raise him after his father tragically perished. To say this graduation celebration was momentous would be an understatement.

It was also the space where a double birthday happened this year! Two of the residents had the same birthday and had both expressed that they hadn't really celebrated their birthday in a few years. So... members of the community made sure it was special with decorations, a cake, presents, games and even live music! The Home is a place where hope thrives. Thank

you for making it so! We truly could not have made such a vibrant Home without you!

And a Future:

At Inner Hope, we want to see youth, their families, and the next generation thrive. We are a community that fosters connection, support, and belonging. We provide a safe place to rest and a nurturing space to grow. We help young people gain essential skills that equip them to build strong futures. We create space for young people to grow in relationship with The Creator through mentorship and prayer. We stand together through the highs and lows, cultivating a community that loves each other in practical ways.

We know that dignity, respect, and valuing cultural heritage are essential as we work together toward right relationships and holistic healing.

We hope these words bring you joy and a reminder of the deeper impacts of the nativity story.

God bless,

Jenny Shantz,
Executive Director

