

# Curb Notes

## A Mission Store Champion

Jessica Gowers, Communications &  
Public Relations Coordinator



### Elisha's Story:

Elisha Mugabo left Kenya and arrived in London, Ontario with his parents and seven siblings on July 9, 2019. Entering Canada through a refugee settlement program, Elisha and his family left behind their home, belongings, and a familiar way of life.

As part of their transition into making Canada feel like home, Elisha and his family needed basic supplies. Through the support of a settlement program, Elisha and his family were referred to the Mission Store's Emergency Voucher program.

Elisha recalls going to the Mission Store with his family and receiving a list with some of the items his family may need to start their new life in Canada. "The paper had a list and said something like 'x8 spoons, x5 t-shirts, x1 footwear,' everything we needed," Elisha remembers.

"After we got the list, we went through the store and picked out the t-shirts we wanted or the winter jackets we wanted right off the rack, just like as if we were shopping. Once we had all the items on the list, we took it back to the same woman to double check we had everything. Then, we would leave. It was all free."

The Mugabo family went back to the Emergency Voucher Program a few times during their settlement process. "We arrived in the summer, so we would go back to get what we needed for the upcoming season," Elisha shares.

Two years later in 2021, Elisha was working at a factory in St. Thomas. Ready to move on to the next chapter of his professional life, Elisha sought out work through an employment agency. The agency found the Mission Store and suggested Elisha apply to volunteer.

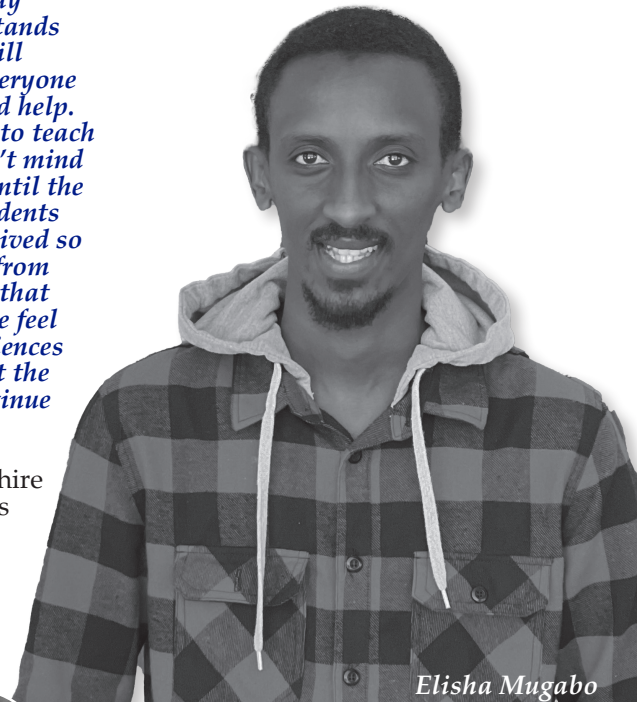
Elisha volunteered at the Mission Store for eight months. "I recall the first day coming through the door and meeting a smiling face, ready to take me through the introduction. That instantly killed any anxiety I had at the time," Elisha said.

*"I must say I felt welcome from day one and was super happy. What stands out to me from back then, and I still experience to this day was that everyone was always willing to jump in and help. Everyone wanted, and still wants to teach me how things are done. They don't mind teaching things again and again until the skill is registered. I had a few incidents while at the cash register, but received so much support and understanding from my team leaders. The reassurance that mistakes can be corrected made me feel more confident. Hearing the experiences of other volunteers and workers at the Mission Store encouraged me continue and serve more." -Elisha*

After eight months, a position for hire opened up. Elisha applied and was successful. Today, Elisha works in various roles throughout the Mission Store. He is a versatile, skilled employee, working at the cash register, on the floor, at the

fitting rooms, and doing "white-tag" (merchandising and planning events for the Mission Store's boutique items).

*"Elisha has been a great addition to our Mission Store family. He's hard-working and always brings positivity into every shift. He's loved by his coworkers and uplifts the energy of the team." - Lorraine Chwiecko, Store Manager*



Elisha Mugabo



# MISSIONSTORE

## What is Our Mission Store and How Does it Operate?

Jessica Gowers

*Communications & Public Relations Coordinator*

Originally named "Clothing Centre," Mission Store opened in 1964 out of the Men's Mission. The Mission Store has grown over the years and in 2018, in order to better support the community, the Store relocated to 797 York Street.

The Mission Store receives donations from the public, which are then used in a variety of ways. Some donations may be used to fulfill needs at our Men's Mission, Rotholme Family Shelter, or Quintin Warner House sites, while other donations could be designated for our Emergency Voucher Program. Some donations go into the Mission Store itself, and are then sold to shoppers at a modest price, or are selected by Voucher clients.

The Mission Store operates under a few umbrellas all at once, including as a social enterprise, as a not-for-profit, and as a registered charity.



*Located at 797 York Street, London, Ontario*

### **Social Enterprise:**

A social enterprise is a business that generates revenue while achieving social impact. The ways in which our Mission Store achieves social impact are listed below:

- **Emergency Voucher Program:** From 2022 - 2023, the Emergency Voucher Program provided **over \$168,888** in free voucher goods to individuals in need (see Emergency Voucher Program section).
- **Warm Hands - Warm Hearts Program:** From 2022 - 2023, the Warm Hands - Warm Hearts Program provided 45 local schools with winter accessories for children in need (see Warm Hands - Warm Hearts section).
- **Work Placement Partnerships:** Mission Store works with local employment agencies to provide thousands of hours each year to those facing employment barriers.
- **Mission Services of London Program Support:** Items donated to Mission Store may be directly used by our other sites, including Men's Mission, Rotholme Family Shelter, and Quintin Warner House.
- **Affordability:** Providing a place for lower-income individuals and families to find what they need at affordable prices.
- **Donation Pick-Up Services:** Ensuring everyone has a way to donate, even if they cannot drop off the items themselves.
- **Environmental Impact:** Collecting and selling pre-loved goods means keeping items out of landfills, reducing carbon and chemical pollution caused by manufacturing, and lowering water consumption.

### **Not-For-Profit:**

As established within the social enterprise definition, the Mission Store is a business; however, the Mission Store is also a not-for-profit. The revenue generated by the Mission Store is used in a variety of ways. The Mission Store's revenue goes to necessities, such as leasing costs, labour costs (our Mission Store employs under 20 staff members, and has approximately 105 volunteers), operational costs (hangers, tags, utilities, maintenance, etc.), and to make up for lost potential merchandise sales, as a result of giving away items for free through the Emergency Voucher Program.

### **Registered Charity:**

Since the Mission Store is operated by Mission Services of London, it also falls under our Registered Charity designation. Because of this, shoppers are able to purchase their items tax-free.

## Our Mission Store is in Desperate Need of Volunteers

If you are willing to donate your time to Mission Services of London, we could really use your help in our Mission Store. We are currently looking for Cashiers, Fitting Room Attendants, and Sorters to work a four-hour volunteer shift per week.

The Mission Store survives off volunteer support. The impact of our Mission Store volunteers on the lives of people in need is profound. Mission Store volunteers provide each client and shopper with social interaction. It's very common for our vulnerable neighbours to experience loneliness and isolation. The social engagement volunteers provide when checking out their items or helping them access a fitting room is deeply meaningful. It can truly be the best part of someone's day. Volunteers are also helping to provide our clients with the items they need to stay warm in the winter or to furnish their homes.

**If you're interested in volunteering with the Mission Store, please email: [volunteer@missionservices.ca](mailto:volunteer@missionservices.ca)**

# Ilona Janoschek: 23 Year-Long Donor to Mission Services of London Celebrates 98th Birthday

Mission Services of London went to visit Ilona Janoschek to wish her a happy 98th birthday, and to thank her for the donations made by her and her late husband, Klaus Janoschek, to Mission Services of London for over 23 years.

We also visited Ilona to wish her a happy 98th birthday!

Immigrating to Canada in 1955, Ilona said that her passion for Mission Services of London lies

## The Emergency Voucher Program:

Mission Services of London has operated the Emergency Voucher Program in the London and area community for more than 55 years. The program is intended as an emergency service for those in need of a basic set of clothing, outerwear in the cold, and small household items.

Individuals who are unsheltered or living in an emergency state are able to access the program multiple times per year, including during the change of the seasons.

## Warm Hands - Warm Hearts:

The Mission Store began its annual Warm Hands - Warm Hearts Outreach Program in 1995 to provide an emergency supply of warm accessories to children in need. Warm Hands - Warm Hearts is designed to be used as an emergency supply. For instance, the donations could be extended to a student who needs a winter hat for recess, or to a student who got wet socks during their walk to school. If a child is in need of a winter coat or boots, their school will encourage their parent to visit our Mission Store to access the Emergency Voucher Program.

Throughout the year, our Mission Store collects new or gently used donations of children's hats, waterproof mittens or gloves, socks, and new underwear for donation to school-aged children. This year, the donations will be offered to over 60 elementary schools throughout Thames Valley District School Board, London District Catholic School Board, and our neighbouring First Nations Elementary Schools to be used between the months of November and February.

By providing students with hats, mittens, and socks, their walks to and from school are less frigid, and waiting for the bus during the icy early morning hours becomes more bearable. Children are also better prepared for recess on cold, snowy days. By having appropriate winter wear, children are able to build the core memories we all cherish of playing in the snow with friends. The donations made to Warm Hands - Warm Hearts help to give vulnerable students the magic of winter during childhood, without having to worry about having cold hands or wet feet.

If you would like to donate hats, mittens, socks, or new underwear to Warm Hands - Warm Hearts, you can drop off your donations to the Mission Store, located at 797 York Street. Please mark your donation as "Warm Hands - Warm Hearts" somewhere within your donation bag.

within her own memories of being hungry and in need of help from generous strangers.

Ilona and Klaus donated their clothing to Mission Store whenever they could. Ilona, often handmaking their clothing at the time, said Klaus felt strongly about passing on his gently-used items to those who needed it most.

Even when there was no clothing to donate, Ilona recalls herself and Klaus remembering Mission Services of London by sending monthly monetary donations.

Mission Services of London is honoured to have had the support from Ilona and Klaus since 2001, and to have celebrated with Ilona in welcoming her 98th year.

Mission Services of London is grateful for the generosity and support of all it's donors. Thank you.

Once they are no longer in an emergency state, previous clients of the Emergency Voucher Program are provided with two 50 percent off discounted shopping experiences per year.

To ensure each client has the dignity of choice, they are provided a slip upon arrival containing everything they're able to shop for, for free.



Ilona Janoschek, September 8, 2023



Ilona Janoschek and Klaus Janoschek

MISSION STORE	
Name:	
Voucher dated:	SEPT. 17/23
Voucher expires on:	OCT. 18/23
Eligible for a NEW voucher dated after:	NOV. 20/23
**NO WHITE TAGS ALLOWED ON VOUCHERS**	
**ITEMS WITHOUT TAGS CANNOT BE PROCESSED**	
**NO RETURNS PERMITTED- TRY YOUR ITEMS ON**	
EACH PERSON ON THE VOUCHER MAY GET THE FOLLOWING ITEMS	
1 PAIR OF CLOTHING - (CLOTHING ALLOCATION CANNOT BE DATED OR	
REUSED)	
2 PAIRS OF UNDERWEAR	
2 PAIRS OF SOCKS	
2 HATS - AS APPLICABLE - (DOES NOT INCLUDE BUNNETS/TOPIS OR	
UNDERWEAR)	
1 PAIR OF FOOTWEAR - (REQUESTS FOR SAFETY SHOOTS/SHOES MUST MEET	
CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS)	
1 SEASONAL JACKET - OUTERWEAR IS ONE PER CLIENT PER SEASON	

Emergency Voucher Slip

## Impacting LIVES through sites and programs:

### Men's Mission

459 York Street  
519-672-8500

### Rotholme Family Shelter

42 Stanley Street  
519-673-4114

### Quintin Warner House

457 York Street  
519-434-8041

### Community Mental Health Programs

4-797 York Street  
519-439-7700 (Streetscape)

### Mission Store

4-797 York Street  
519-438-3056

### Mission Services of London Foundation

4-797 York Street  
519-433-2807

### Administration Office

4-797 York Street  
519-433-2807

Visit [missionservices.ca](https://missionservices.ca)

Find us on Twitter (X), Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram

Newsletter Contact:

[jgowers@missionservices.ca](mailto:jgowers@missionservices.ca)

Charitable Registration

#119302578RR0001

Thank you to our government funders:



## Providers of 2023's Thanksgiving Dinner to Mission Services of London's Shelters

Mission Services of London is deeply grateful to Dillon Consulting and the Rotary Club of South London for providing residents at our Men's Mission, Rotholme Family Shelter, and Quintin Warner House sites with Thanksgiving dinner. Thanks to the two donors, the residents were able to enjoy a festive, hearty turkey dinner, with pumpkin pie for dessert.



Source: Dillon Consulting



Source: Rotary Club of South London

### October, by Kola-Poems

It sneaked in the smallest breeze,  
The day's broken in keener October smiles.  
It could rain and sun in its wheeze.  
Roads are strewn in brown and golden leaves.

Standing alone on Blackfriars Bridge,  
In deep reflection as a soul discovery.  
This is a month of harvest and beauty,  
Some days in myths and tapestry tales.

Sunshine and rainbow, archery arrow,  
Through the eye of Horus, bent and squashed.  
Thanksgiving Day is a jewel in the row,  
From the seat of the soul comes my gratitude.

You are welcome, long-awaited October,  
Robbins and blue jays perking on apple trees.  
The days of high sun are obviously numbered,  
We all wait, please unravel your mysteries.

- Kola-Poems, October 1, 2023

*Kola-Poems is a resident of Men's Mission. You can support his poetry by contacting him at [kolapoems@gmail.com](mailto:kolapoems@gmail.com)*

## Provide a Meal and Hope for \$3.99

Just \$3.99 helps Mission Services of London provide a meal for someone staying at Men's Mission, Rotholme Family Shelter, or Quintin Warner House.

You can donate \$3.99, or increments of, by visiting <https://missionservices.ca/give-online/> or by visiting one of the grocery stores participating in our annual campaign, Scan Away Hunger™.

Participating Locations: Metro®, Food Basics®, Remark Fresh Market at 1190 Oxford Street West, and Valumart®, to make a donation at check out.

Thank you for inspiring hope for a hungry neighbour.

