

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015**



## **Winter sets record for increased need at Our Place**

**VICTORIA, B.C.** – Demand for a hot meal and warm shelter at Our Place has experienced a dramatic increase this winter – and there are no signs of it slowing down. In December, Our Place served over 62,000 meals, bringing its total for the year to a staggering 526,884 meals.

For comparison, in 2013, Our Place served 343,463 meals.

“Our costs are up, but we haven’t had to turn anybody away yet,” says Brian Cox, manager of food services.

Don Evans, executive director of Our Place, adds, “Part of the increase in people accessing services is due to Our Place staying open in the evening this winter. People are desperate for a dry, safe place to go when the temperature drops. We are seeing a lot of new faces, however, especially low-income people, seniors, working poor, and those with mental health issues and physical disabilities.”

Our Place extended its hours until 9 p.m., seven days per week, to help bridge the gap between day and overnight shelter during the winter months.

“It shows just how essential every donation is,” adds Evans. “We rely on the generosity of the community, and any amount, large or small, helps us better serve the needs of Greater Victoria’s impoverished citizens.”

Our Place is a unique community centre serving Greater Victoria’s most vulnerable: working poor, impoverished elderly, individuals with mental health and physical challenges, and the homeless. It provides over 1,500 meals per day, hot showers, clothing, counseling and outreach services, education and work programs, and 45 transitional housing units. Most importantly, it provides a sense of hope and belonging to our neighbours in need.

-30-

**For further information, please contact:**

Grant McKenzie  
Director of Communications  
C: 250-217-2406  
Email: [grantm@ourplacesociety.com](mailto:grantm@ourplacesociety.com)

Don Evans, Executive Director  
Our Place Society  
Cell: 778-977-4921  
Email: [don@ourplacesociety.com](mailto:don@ourplacesociety.com)