

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2015**



## **Our Place expands hours for winter**

### ***Drop-In will remain open until 9 p.m. every night***

**VICTORIA, B.C.** – With colder weather approaching, Our Place is extending its hours to ensure a warm, safe sanctuary for those experiencing poverty and homelessness.

Beginning Monday, Nov. 2, Our Place will be open from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m., seven days per week. Winter hours will run until the end of February.

“Being open longer hours in the winter is so important to the people we serve,” says Don Evans, executive director of Our Place. “The nights are wet and cold, and many overnight shelters don’t open until nine or ten. We don’t want to leave vulnerable people out in the cold without a place to go.”

Last winter, Our Place launched a pilot project to extend its hours and discovered the evening hours were as busy as daytime.

“With the support of our donors, we made the decision to extend our hours again this year,” says Evans. “The program will run for four months, and it only takes one look at the faces of people coming in from the rain to know it’s the right thing to do.”

During the same four-month winter period last year, Our Place served over 230,000 meals.

In addition to extending its hours, Our Place has also opened an overnight shelter at nearby First Met United Church that accepts individuals, plus couples and people with pets, two groups that have an especially difficult time securing a dry, safe place to sleep. That shelter provides 40 sleeping mats, and operates from 7:30 p.m. to 7 a.m., every night of the week.

“Our donors are vital to the success of our mission,” adds Laura Walsh, director of development. “So many of them have stepped up to become monthly donors because they understand how important it is for us to be a sanctuary for people who have such a challenging life.”

To help with expanded hours, Our Place is actively looking for additional volunteers, especially for weekend mornings. More information, including upcoming orientation sessions, can be found on the website: [www.ourplacesociety.com](http://www.ourplacesociety.com)

Our Place is a unique inner-city community centre serving Greater Victoria’s most vulnerable: working poor, impoverished elderly, mentally and physically challenged,

addicted and the homeless. Individuals and businesses provide the majority of financial support for its programs and services. Our Place provides over 1,500 meals per day, hot showers, education, job skills, free clothing, counseling and outreach services, plus 45 transitional housing units. Most importantly, it provides a sense of hope and belonging to our neighbours in need.

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