



Bethesda. Faith. Service. Inclusion.

*50th Anniversary 1971-2021*

# Annual Report 2021



# This is our mission

As an expression of our Christian faith, we support and empower people with disabilities and their families, experiencing the joys and challenges of life together.

Bethesda supports and empowers people with diverse abilities and their families through services such as staffed residential homes, shared living, community inclusion, supported independent living, intentional communities where people of all abilities live, summer camps, employment services and family support services. At Bethesda we are committed to building communities of belonging; communities where everyone's God-given skills and abilities are welcomed and valued. Starting in Abbotsford in 1971, we now support about 300 people and their families in the Lower Mainland, south Okanagan and in Smithers. Bethesda is a Christian not-for-profit organization with a staff of approximately 390.

Find our Bethesda mission, vision, values and more at [bethesdabc.com/about-us/](https://bethesdabc.com/about-us/)

## Provincial Office Opening

Bethesda reached a major milestone this year, a milestone 5 years in the making. Partnering with Bethesda Christian Foundation, Bethesda now owns its office building in the heart of Abbotsford. The ribbon-cutting ceremony of the newly constructed provincial office is on September 16, 2021. (See page 9 for more information.)

For years, Bethesda leadership was aware that a new office space was required to accommodate organizational growth and strengthen its presence in the community. In 2015, the Board gave the approval to pursue the goal of finding a new provincial office.

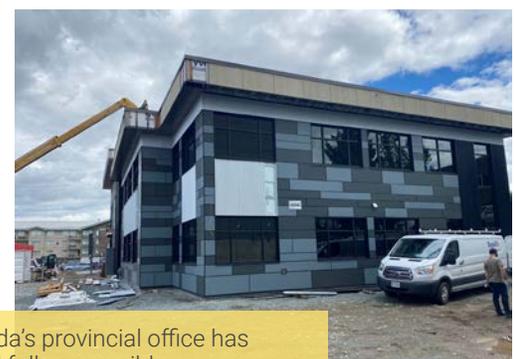
A property development committee was formed and in February 2016, the committee presented the Association and Foundation boards with a ¾ acre property proposal that met the budget and was located in central Abbotsford. The Bethesda Christian Foundation completed the purchase of the property by the fall of 2016. Over the next two years, the committee met some challenges after the city approved a new official city plan which included changes that impacted Bethesda's building plans. But after modifications were made, an agreement was reached with the City and we were able to proceed to the construction stage.

In the early spring of 2020, the permits were in place and the board of directors and CEO held a small ground-breaking ceremony. From April 2020 to August 2021, despite minor setbacks caused by the COVID pandemic, progress was steady with no significant delays.



Original artist's rendition from 2020, of the office building.

Learn more about Bethesda's new provincial office at [www.bethesdabc.com/blog/](https://www.bethesdabc.com/blog/)



Progress on the new building as of May 2021. Designing and owning Bethesda's provincial office has enabled us to custom-design a space from the ground up to be inclusive and fully accessible.

# CEO Message

**Living our Mission:** As an expression of our Christian faith, we support and empower people with disabilities and their families, experiencing the joys and challenges of life together.

50 Years! This is a significant milestone for Bethesda. Fifty years ago, families and friends of people with diverse abilities responded to God's call on their heart to support people to have better lives; lives rooted in inclusion and belonging. Fifty years later, we continue to respond to the same call, and like our founders, we continue to be social change agents who are wholeheartedly committed to supporting people of all abilities to live as self-directed and inclusive lives as possible.

It has been quite a year! The global pandemic has required much of the people we support, their families, staff and caregivers. But there have also been many unexpected blessings during this time. Frequently, staff talk about how the public health restrictions have caused them to slow down and appreciate a slower pace of life, have prompted them to enjoy the outdoors more, and afforded them more quality time with those they live with. Our Covid-19 positive cases remained low thanks to Bethesda's incredible staff who have worked tirelessly to support and encourage the people we support. They showed up at work every day to support people, putting the health of the people we support above their own. I witnessed staff courageously and selflessly serve in an uncertain and fearful time. Because of them, the people we support were kept safe physically and emotionally during this time.

We look forward, with hope, of some 'normalcy' returning as the COVID-19 vaccinations roll out. All the people we support and staff who want to, now have access to a vaccine bringing us closer to the day where this virus no longer dictates how we live.

I am excited to share this year's annual report with you. We continue to celebrate God's faithfulness and provision and as we look back over the past year, we can see how God led us and protected us in so many ways. We have also provided a 50th anniversary commemorative insert dedicated to reflecting on the last 50 years.

If you say, "The LORD is my refuge," and you make the Most High your dwelling, no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. Psalm 91:9-12

We all know that it is essential to measure outcomes to remain accountable for the work we are entrusted with, and as a learning organization we want to continue to grow. We



want to support and empower people with diverse abilities to live as self-directed lives as possible. We continue to shift our focus to life building vs. custodial care, paying particular attention to social connections and belonging. I think Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert say it best in their book, *When Helping Hurts*, "The key dynamic in development is promoting an empowering process in which all people involved – both the 'helpers' and the helped – become more of what God created them to be".

In response to all He has done for us, let us outdo each other in being helpful and kind to each other and in doing good. Hebrews 10:24

We are excited to be moving into our new provincial office and we cannot wait to share it with you at our 50th Celebration/AGM/ Grand Opening Event on September 16th. It took 5 years to get to this moment, with unanticipated delays along the way, but God was faithful in providing and guiding the dream to completion.

We are so grateful for our employees who are committed to thoughtful, creative and intentional support that empowers people to lead lives of great value in their communities. We are also privileged to have a skilled and engaged administrative and technical support team, leadership team and board of directors who faithfully commit themselves to the service of others.

We are especially grateful for the opportunity to 'share life' with the people who choose our services. Bethesda exists to support people with diverse abilities and thrives in reciprocal relationships, inclusive communities, and lifestyles rooted in true belonging. We are only capable of thriving when we thrive together.

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jody".

Jody Siebert, CEO

# Our Services in 2020/21

Last year, 291 people with diverse abilities and their families participated in 9 services we offer, some using more than one service.

100 people participated in person-centred planning and set a total of 221 goals in 8 quality of life areas.

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113	Community Inclusion
20	Employment
103	Family Support
46	Home Share
15	Intentional Community
1	Respite
80	Staffed Residential
40	Summer Camps
34	Supported Independent Living

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27	Emotional and spiritual well-being
31	Interpersonal relationships
10	Material well-being
47	Personal development
67	Physical well-being and mental health
16	Self-determination
19	Social inclusion
4	Rights

As diverse as the services are, they have in common a **commitment to inclusion and interdependence**. We believe that an inclusive world that makes room for people of all abilities is a world in which we can all grow together.

Person Centered Planning is at the heart of all our services for people with diverse abilities and their families. Person Centered Planning asks, "What are the unique goals, gifts and abilities of each person?" Creating a plan is a collaboration between the person supported, their Circle of Support and their key or primary support staff. It sets out goals for promoting the person's quality of life.

## Family Support Services

During the COVID pandemic, families more than ever, discovered the value of Family Support Services. Many of the services their loved ones would normally attend were disrupted due to public health orders. This left many families to provide 24/7 care. On top of all the other impacts, such as school and workplace closures, and the isolation from even close family, life became very challenging.

Families were able to reach out to Joyce Vander Hoek, the Director of Family Support Services. Joyce was there to offer advice, guidance, information about resources, and to be a listening ear.

To assist families, we provided extra support through respite and an extended day camp season, problem solving and crisis support, and navigating government systems.

Joyce, who served with Bethesda for over 38 years, left Bethesda in early 2021. We appreciate her passion for serving families and people with diverse abilities. Joyce worked closely with so many families and will be missed. She left us with these encouraging words.

"Bethesda has that firm foundation of a deep-rooted belief in the providence and blessing of a faithful God. But who is Bethesda? For 50 years, it has been families, volunteers, employees and board members who held true to honoring that faithful God; today, it's each of you as you grow in your knowledge of your loving, gracious and trust-worthy God. It's each of you as you desire to serve God and live lives of deep gratitude."

Rodney Wiebe has stepped into the role, becoming the new Director of Family Support and Community Development. As a former Home Share Coordinator with Bethesda, he is well-positioned to take up

this new role and continue to support our community of families.

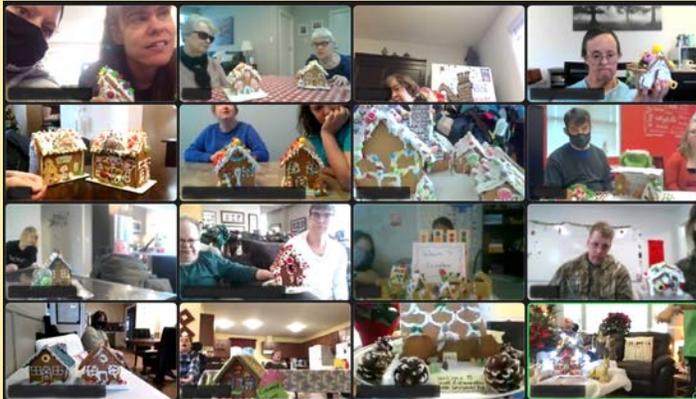


Bethesda welcomes Rodney Wiebe into a new position as he transfers from his Home Share Coordinator position to the Director of Family Services and Community Development. Rodney is particularly excited about developing new relationships and strengthening long-lasting ones in our community.

# A Few Highlights of our Services

## Community Inclusion

In-person community inclusion services (CI) were disrupted during the pandemic, but with people needing social connection and the stimulation of activities, we offered an online inclusion service in the fall of 2020 called "Bethesda Connections". The zoom-based interactive sessions feature activities such as baking cookies, pumpkin carving, bingo, sign language learning, and social events. Bethesda Connections is a continuing service available for anyone we support living at home, in home share or in a staffed residential home.



The zoom CI Christmas party was well attended by people we support in 15 different homes and community inclusion services. The highlight was the gingerbread contest with many original and creative entries.

## Mephi's Safe Visit Room

Bethesda opened a safe visiting room to allow people supported by Bethesda to safely visit during the pandemic. This allowed Stephen and Mac, 2 brothers who live apart, to visit for the first time in a long time.



Mac (*right in photo*) was so excited for their first visit. He

brought along a model train set, his favourite hobby, to show Stephen (*left in photo*). Stephen brought with him a card from everyone at Vedder Terrace with their greetings, to give to Mac.

While visitors still couldn't physically come close to each other, it was clear to see that it was a joyful experience for everyone as they could at least see each other in person during such a difficult season! The safe visiting room is no longer available for visits but may be re-opened if restrictions on indoor visitation become necessary in the future.

## Intentional Community – Vedder Terrace 5 years on

It has been Bethesda's dream to build intentional communities: a place of belonging that offers accessibility, acceptance and inclusion, autonomy and decision-making, supported living environments, engagement with the surrounding community and encouragement of personal growth through a model of compassion and interdependence.

After five years, Vedder Terrace, one of our intentional communities, has demonstrated beyond expectation, what this definition means.

For the residents who live in the 9 units and the others who attend Community Inclusion and Supported Independent Living, belonging to the community of Vedder Terrace has opened doors to unimagined possibilities.

Vedder Terrace offers people with diverse abilities safety and security so they can put their energy and focus into setting personal goals. Jane explains how much of a game-changer for people that is, "If you don't feel safe, and you're worried about everything, you can't focus on self-actualization. So coming here, having that safety and security, then you can ask, what are my goals, where do I want to go in life."

From this starting point, people thrive from the encouragement of each other. Jane says, "I didn't quite expect to see so much growth and independence of people. Because people here are

so strongly bonded, so neighbourly, they encourage each other to grow and strengthen the community they live in. Everyone comes alongside each other."

Mary-Ann, who lives at Vedder Terrace agrees. "I was lonely living in my old place, and it just didn't work out for me. My sister said 'this is just an amazing place for you to be, in community, with other people'. I get so much support. Support is just a phone call or walk away, people are very encouraging here."



Community projects like the woodworking workshop, community garden, the weekly community meals, all reinforce the bonds. While respecting each person's right to independence and their own choices.

Read the full story and celebration of Vedder Terrace's 5th anniversary at <https://bethesdabc.com/blog/>

# Empowering People with

Fifty years of learning from the people we serve what they need to thrive. In doing so, making the world a better place for people of all abilities.

Here are a few stories of how our services empower people with diverse abilities—with an unceasing commitment to inclusion and interdependence.

Gary was supported at Bethesda for over 40 years, both as a resident in a staffed home and through employment services. He moved into Mt. Lehman home as a young man where he thrived. Since 1992, he worked at Pizza Hut in Abbotsford for 28 years, folding take-out boxes. That job meant so much to Gary. And while Gary benefited in many ways from his job, he also gave to the people he worked with. Gary passed away in 2020, but he had a lasting impact on those he worked with. "Gary was so much more than just an employee at Pizza Hut. He was a comfortable presence who allowed those he interacted with to fully be themselves with him. If this is what work was to Gary, then he truly, lived to work."

Read the full story about Gary and the power of inclusive employment at <https://bethesdabc.com/garys-story/>



Gary fist-bumping his manager at Pizza Hut, Salama, after receiving a certificate of appreciation for 25 years of service. The recognition and knowing he was valued meant a lot to Gary.



Self-advocates are empowered to make decisions about their own life and contribute to their community. Jack, James and Jaquie, in the photo above, are three self-advocates who chose to give back to their community in Chilliwack over Christmas, by collecting for the 2020 Salvation Army Kettle campaign.

Self-Advocates of Bethesda developed a webpage at [www.bethesdabc.com/self-advocates/](http://www.bethesdabc.com/self-advocates/) where they share information about who they are, what they do, as well as pictures, videos, and much more. Kya, a self-advocate, explains the importance to self-advocates of having a voice. Watch her video at [https://youtu.be/Tclm2D\\_ikYA](https://youtu.be/Tclm2D_ikYA).

Amy, Amber, Jamie and Rachel from West Clearbrook home made Christmas cards to send to seniors in the Oxford Senior Care home. It is just a small way they were able to extend love to people who were isolated during the pandemic.



# Diverse Abilities

COVID-19 vaccines were being distributed within a year of the start of the global pandemic. In March 2020, people we support who live in our staffed residential homes were eligible to receive their first vaccine.



Stephen enjoys his online music therapy with Jared. He looks forward to these sessions and likes to play the tambourine or drums as Jared plays the guitar and sings. Stephen's favourite music is gospel and his favourite song is 'My Saviour's Love'. Music therapy was on hold most of the past year because of COVID and only started up again online in February. Stephen's very happy to have it back in his life



Carolyn is raising money for the Rick Hansen Foundation. She watches Rick Hansen's videos and considers him to be a good friend. This is giving Carolyn a reason to walk everyday, build her strength and stay as healthy as she can, and it is for a good cause!

She walks every day in her Richmond neighbourhood and staff participate by encouraging her, walking with her and donating to her fundraising jar. Carolyn is planning to keep walking and raising money until the end of 2021. She is looking forward to a time when she can personally take the jar to Rick and share her story with him.



# We Remember

*"But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself." Philippians 3:20-21.*



Gary Margodt  
December 11, 1957 – May 23, 2020



Henry Siemens  
October 20, 1952 – November 28, 2020



James Roy Davies  
August 27, 1950 – December 25, 2020



Deborah Philip  
May 16, 1951 – January 6, 2021

We remember these people's lives, forever burning bright in our hearts and memories. They leave a deep impact on the many people they touched with their love and unique spirit. Until we meet again.

## E-newsletter!

You can receive news, updates and stories to your inbox 4 times per year. Signup for email delivery of our e-newsletter at [bethesdabc.com/contact-us/#email-signup/](https://bethesdabc.com/contact-us/#email-signup/)

# 2020/21 at Bethesda

Meeting our strategic plan targets.

## Strategic Plan Year 3

% goals completed  
in 5 priority areas

Capacity to respond to service needs

87.5%\*



Effective marketing and communication  
systems and practices

100%



Effective staff leadership development  
and succession practices

100%



Engaged and equipped staff

100%



People receiving services empowered as  
leaders and decision-makers

100%



\*Due to pandemic restrictions, some of  
our service goals were postponed.

2020/21 was a year of responding to a global pandemic. But throughout the crisis, we continued to build on our systems, and procedures to improve our services, develop inspiring leadership, and create motivating and safe workplaces for staff in their service to others.

## Leadership

- CEO participated on the BC CEO Network board of directors.
- Leaders participated in Communities of Practice and on CLBC service provider calls with Public Health.

## Services

- Completed construction of a fully accessible home in East Abbotsford.
- Redesigned Community Inclusion so people could participate in virtual gatherings.
- Initiated planning steps for an intentional community in Abbotsford.

## Staff Support

- Completed quarterly staff exit survey analyses.
- Added staff relations training for managers.
- Distributed an interactive employee handbook to reinforce positive work culture.
- Redesigned staff orientation and resources.

## Staff Recruitment

- Contracted a recruitment specialist.
- Increased use of social media and other online platforms for recruiting.

## Self-Advocates

- Self-advocate's webpage developed with input from self-advocates.
- Launched online learning modules for self-advocates.
- Launched accessibility tools on Bethesda's website.

## Stakeholder Connection

- Updated the Lend a Hand fundraising procedures and met the \$200,000 goal

# CARF Reaccreditation Survey and Results

Every three years, Bethesda completes an independent assessment through CARF\* to receive accreditation. This past June, we completed our 7th survey.

The survey is done over three days by CARF officials who systematically assess our services, procedures, protocols, systems, offices and service facilities. They audit a sample of our services and homes, speak to people we support in different service areas, as well as interview staff, board directors, families, and professionals and agency officials that work with us, and examine almost everything we do and the ways we do it against CARF's exacting standards.

The preparation for the survey starts many months ahead. Almost the entire staff of Bethesda is enlisted to help with the necessary updates, revisions and modifications that are required to meet the standards. For the key staff involved, led by Dan Steenburgh, co-chief of operations, it is a test of endurance, with the effort building intensely in the month leading up to the survey.

As with previous successful surveys, we were awarded another 3-year accreditation. In the closing ceremony report, one surveyor said "I was taken in by the care, warmth, and generous compassion of staff toward the people you support." Another surveyor remarked on Bethesda's commitment to inclusion, saying "it was impressive how Bethesda incorporates the people served into all aspects of their organization, from self-advocates advisory committee to changes in programming and design of the homes, it's clear this organization supports



the individuals they serve to be in charge of their own lives and choices."

Hearing this kind of feedback is heartening and highly encouraging to the entire Bethesda family.

Why do we do this every three years? Not so that we can claim we are perfect. But so we can demonstrate to our stakeholders our conformance to proven standards of practices required by organizations like ours, and a commitment to continuously improve service quality and to focus on the satisfaction of the people served.

\* CARF® stands for Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. It is a non-profit organization focused on advancing the quality of services for health and human service providers. CARF is an independent accrediting body of health and human services, operating throughout North and South America, Europe, Asia and Oceania. CARF has been accrediting organizations in Canada since 1969.

## Celebrating our Bethesda Family and God's Goodness. 50 years Together!

A celebratory banner for Bethesda's 50th anniversary and provincial office opening. The text reads: "Bethesda Celebrates 50th Anniversary &amp; Provincial Office Grand Opening". It features a photo of a woman and a child, a large "50" logo with "1971-2021" and "50 YEARS" below it, and decorative elements like hearts and colorful stripes. The website "WWW.BETHESDABC.COM" is at the bottom.

Join us on September 16 for our AGM and as we officially open our Provincial Office at 2775 Emerson St. Abbotsford.

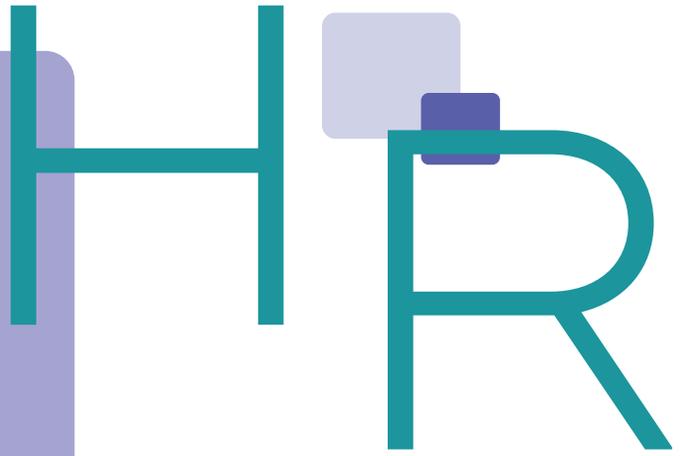
**Office Opening Ceremony** at 10:30 am - 12 pm, by invitation only.

**Tours of the new office building** and on-site food trucks. Two spots available: 12-1 pm and 1-2 pm.

**Annual General Meeting** at 6:30 for gathering and refreshments. Meeting starts at 7 pm in the Community Inclusion room on the 1st floor of the new office building.

Space is limited depending on COVID guidelines at the time. **Call 604-850-6604 x301 to reserve a spot** for the office building tour or the AGM.

The pandemic created a new set of challenges that impacted HR. Some of the key administrative staff continued to work in the office, requiring precautions to enable them to do so safely such as scheduling to limit number of staff in the office at any one time, health screening protocols, physical distancing and disinfection measures. Mobilizing other office staff to work remotely from home meant equipping staff with equipment, laptops, and the resources they needed to stay connected and to function productively. Within the residential home worksites, staff adjusted to the often-changing protocols as well as dealing individually and as a team with the stress of the pandemic. HR responded to the various challenges by adapting quickly, providing frequent and timely information updates, and with flexibility. As well, HR continued to meet its 5-year strategic outcomes in key areas of training, worker health and safety, and recruitment and retention.



## Stats At a Glance

384 employees

83% female

8.5 Average years service

44.2 years average age

89 new employees hired

11.7% turnover (permanent staff)

## one

We re-organized from multi-site management to one manager per site to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission between sites. While the transition required hiring and training managers to fill the new positions, staff have benefited from increased access to manager support at the 12 sites involved in the change.

## two

The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) committees at each work site reviewed risks and identified training and other resources to support staff in health and safety topics. During the pandemic, staff received COVID-19 guidelines and updates. Staff are now able to access information and resources about health and wellness on ShareVision, our online information management program.

## three

We continued to add new online training modules for staff to access as needed. Respectful Workplace, and Mandt Relational and Conceptual training and occupational health and safety are now available.

## four

Avanti, our new integrated human resources management system is fully operational, providing digital administrative capability in payroll, onboarding, recruiting, as well as providing staff access to their own personal information. The transition, while lengthy, has been positive and led to greater administrative efficiencies.

## five

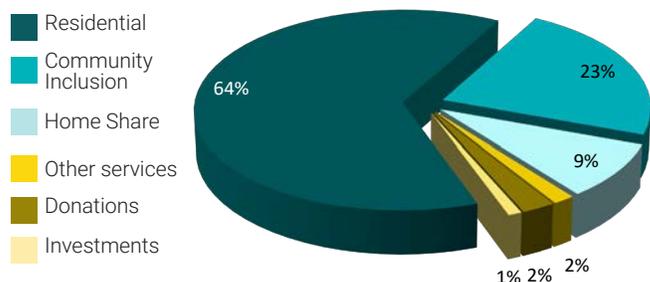
The 2020/21 staff satisfaction survey explored questions about workplace engagement, Bethesda's mission, supervisor relationships, and staff confidence. The majority of the staff responses from 121 respondents, were positive, either strongly agreeing or agreeing to 19 statements. For example, most employees feel Bethesda's vision, mission and values are important to them personally (93.7% agreed), enjoy their work (94.7% agreed), have a positive relationship with their supervisor (84.2% agreed) and make a meaningful contribution to their workplace (96.8% agreed).

# Finance Report

## Revenue & Expenses

### Revenue from Service Contracts, Donations and Investments

Bethesda's primary funder is Community Living BC (CLBC). CLBC funds services for Residential, Community Inclusion, Home Share and other supports. The revenue from CLBC makes up 95% of all revenue. Other sources of revenue are Fraser Health, BC Housing, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, Canada Summer Jobs, donors and investment income.

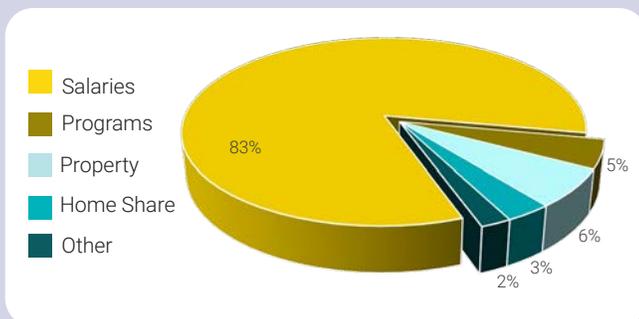


### Program Revenues

Million \$\$/year



### Expenses by Category



## Donations

Generous support from communities throughout B.C. has allowed Bethesda to meet and exceed our donation budget.

Total donations received by Bethesda this year were \$522,000, an increase of 19% over the previous year.



This is an incredible blessing in a year where so many charities are struggling financially because of COVID.

Our annual Camp Bethesda was cancelled in 2020

because of COVID-19 restrictions. However, with the additional donations and funding, we were able to offer a season of summer camps to support children with diverse abilities and their families. We found creative ways to expand our physically distanced locations and be creative in the supports provided. We are looking forward to our camps starting again in 2022 and offering families and caregivers this much needed respite.

Our annual Lend a Hand campaign raises money for Family Support Services and other needs that are not eligible for government support. Our Christmas appeal was also highly successful, raising more than \$106,000.

We are fortunate to have community supporters who partner with us in fundraising activities. Many local businesses and organizations as well as individuals, supported Bethesda with specific needs throughout the year.



Residents of Vedder Terrace were thrilled to receive donations of money and building supplies so they could turn their wood-working dreams into beautiful and well-constructed benches and garden boxes.

## The Board of Directors

Rachel Ludwig, President  
Ray Olthius, 1st Vice President  
Nick Hogewoning, 2nd Vice President  
Andrea Froese, Secretary  
Adam Herman, Treasurer  
Eric VanderGriendt, Director  
Dan Nicholson, Director  
Leslie Scholtens, Director  
James Greendyck, Director  
Kris Versluis, Director  
Jean Dykshoorn Hooge, Director  
Kevin Pastoor, Self Advocate

# Bethesda Leadership



## The Executive Team

Jody Siebert, Chief Executive Officer  
Tori Dalair, Chief Operations Officer  
Dan Steenburgh, Chief Operations Officer/Human Resources  
Greta Nicholson, Chief Financial Officer  
Darlys Carlson McDonald, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Rodney Wiebe, Director of Family Support Services & Community Development  
Ann Trudeau, Director of Services  
Dawna Braun, Director of Services  
Steve Walsh, Director of Services  
Francine Lee, Director of Services  
Darlene Davy, Director of Services  
Mike Strain, Director of Services  
Walter Nordeman, Director of Property Development

## Get in touch

### BETHESDA

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e Life@BethesdaBC.com [www.bethesdabc.com](http://www.bethesdabc.com)

Receive e-news delivered to your email and save postage.  
Sign-up at [www.bethesdabc.com/contact-us/#email-signup](http://www.bethesdabc.com/contact-us/#email-signup)

Save the date! Annual General Meeting - September 16, 2021.  
Details at <https://bethesdabc.com/50-years/#AGM>

Donate to Bethesda's ministry at  
[bethesdabc.com/donate/](http://bethesdabc.com/donate/) or by post.



**Bethesda**  
Faith. Service. Inclusion.