



**Together, We Are Building a
Community Without Poverty**



Every day we witness transformation
– **one connection at a time.**



Hope Lives in the Heart of Our City

At Bissell Centre, we meet people where they are and journey with them as they work toward their goals.

As the cost of living continues to climb, more of our neighbours are facing crisis – forced to make impossible choices between rent, food, and basic needs.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, the dedication of our volunteers, and the expertise of our staff, we can respond to change, meet emerging needs of the community and deepen our impact.

Change happens here – because compassion leads and action follows.

Every year, individuals and families access support through our programs focusing on housing, financial empowerment, family services, Indigenous cultural supports, and more.

People who've felt invisible in society are finding belonging, purpose, and stable places to land.

We're not waiting for change, we're creating it, **together.**

We've Been Here for More Than 100 Years – And We're Not Done Yet

We began in 1910, in a small room with a big mission: to support immigrants struggling with poverty and social isolation. Since then, we've grown alongside the city of Edmonton, continually evolving to meet changing needs with compassion and innovation.

For more than a century, we've stood with our community through recessions, pandemics, and crises – and remained committed to equity, dignity, and care.

But we're not here just to weather storms.
We're here to end poverty in Edmonton.

Generations of learning, trust, and innovation have brought us to this moment, where our legacy fuels bold action, and our experience shows us that real change is possible.

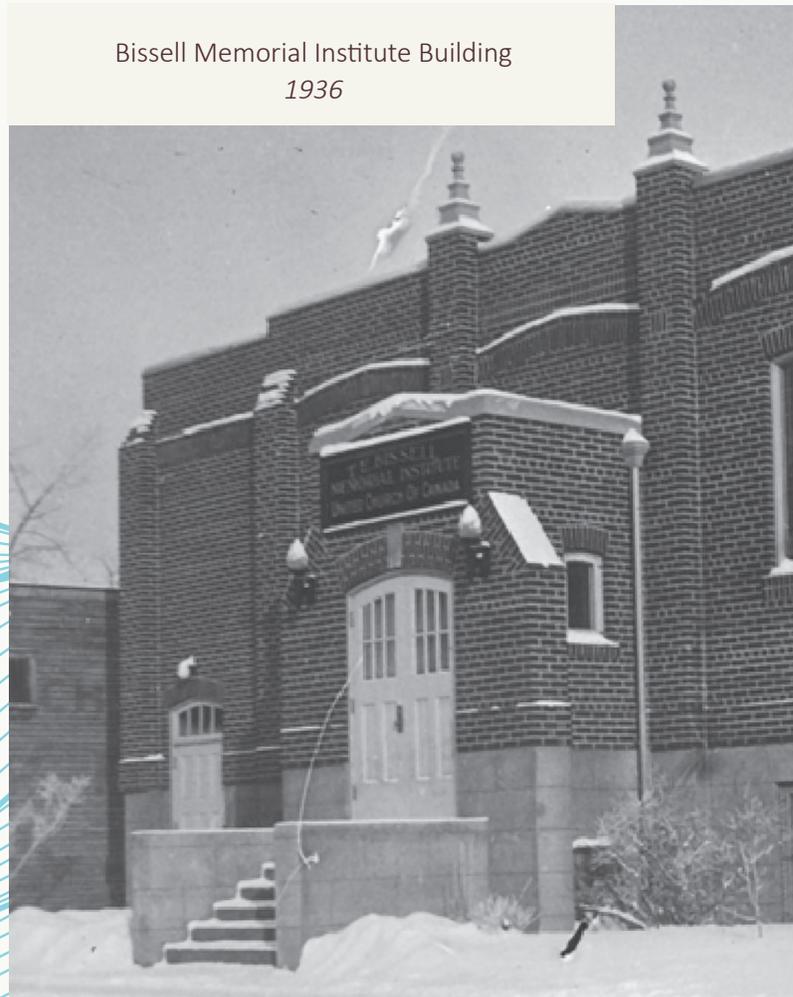
Reverend William Pike & Family
*Founder of All People's Mission,
historical name of Bissell Centre*



**“We're not just offering services
– we're standing with people as
they rebuild their lives.”**

– Sophia, *Manager of Home Visitation*

Bissell Memorial Institute Building
1936





Moonlight Bay Centre
1980



Council of Chiefs Table Meeting
Bissell, 1946



Change That Lasts Starts with Trust

At Bissell Centre, we focus on prevention and stabilization – because real change starts long before crisis and continues long after.

Our work helps people stay housed, strengthen their finances, access parenting and family support, and rebuild connections grounded in culture and community.

We take a human-centred approach that's responsive, grounded in trust and sustainable. We meet people where they are, adapting our services as their needs evolve. By addressing root causes like poverty, trauma, racism and systemic barriers, and journeying alongside people for the long term, we help create the conditions where people not only recover-- they thrive.



HOUSING SUPPORTS

Stable housing is foundational to long-term wellbeing. Our teams work with individuals as they secure and maintain homes, offering consistent, relational support that builds skills and trust and breaks down barriers over time.



FAMILY SUPPORTS

Strong families are at the heart of strong communities. Parenting programs, child care, and wraparound supports ensure caregivers and children have what they need to grow, stay connected, and thrive together.



FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

Managing finances shouldn't be a barrier to stability. Through tax filing, benefit navigation, and personalized support, community members gain confidence, increase their income, and take steps toward lasting financial security.



INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SUPPORTS

We create space for Indigenous community members to reconnect with culture, healing, and community in ways that reflect identity, strength, and belonging.

Together, we're making more possible every day

We can only do what we do because you believe in a better future with us.

For many families, it only takes one missed paycheque for everything to shift. Alex and Maya's family felt it when Maya's shifts were cut. Rent fell behind, and worry grew. A Bissell Centre financial coach helped them build a simple plan, review benefits, and set clear priorities. When their three-year old daughter Emma started attending Bissell's Child Care Centre things eased even more. The program fit their budget and the quality of care was amazing. They were able to access family supports and feel a sense of stability again.

Thanks in part to our partnership with the City of Edmonton's Family and Community Support Services, we are able to provide child care, family outreach, and parenting support to families across our community. Together, we are building a future where every child – and every family – can grow, thrive, and belong.

With a team of trained volunteers, Bissell Centre runs Edmonton's only free, year-round tax clinic. Every year, we help people file their returns and access benefits they are entitled to – bringing millions of dollars back into our community.

- *This narrative is a composite, woven from the real experiences of several participants in our programs. It is shared with care to protect privacy, uphold dignity, and reflect the strengths and successes at the heart of our community.*



We are honoured to walk alongside Indigenous community members on their healing journeys by providing opportunities for them to reconnect with culture, ceremony, and land. We create space for learning, honouring, and remembrance – offering access to Elders and Knowledge Keepers, supporting cultural teachings, and hosting events that uplift Indigenous voices and stories.



Driven by Hope, Guided by Data

Bissell Centre has raised the bar for data collection in the sector. By tracking outcomes, identifying emerging needs, and adapting in real time, we're not just following best practices – we're shaping them.

Real change happens when we respond to people's real lives, not just their emergencies. Across every program, we create supports that are rooted in dignity, flexibility, and data.

Once someone becomes unhoused, it becomes significantly harder – and more expensive – to regain stability. Seeing a critical gap in supports, we formed **Community Bridge** as a unique program helping prevent homelessness before it starts. With fast, targeted support, people facing short-term financial crises are able to regain stability and stay housed.

At our **Early Childhood Development Centre**, we offer full-time child care along with free drop-in respite for temporary child care needs. As part of our program, we emphasize that a balanced, nutritious diet is foundational for optimal development. That's why we provide every child in our care with healthy meals and snacks. When tummies are full of nourishing, delicious food, kids can focus on what matters most: playing, learning, and growing.

And for those with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, we built something Canada had never seen before: **Hope Terrace**, a permanent supportive home that offers structure, stability, and community. With the right environment, residents aren't just surviving, they're building lives that reflect their strengths and worth.

These are just a few ways we turn insight into action, and compassion into lasting change.



Because with your support, we're not just responding to poverty – **we're working to end it.**



From Survival to Safety

Barry spent nearly two decades without a home after losing his mother to addiction at a young age. Disconnected from family and community, he learned to survive in a world that offered little support. “When you’re out there, you’ve got society, and family, and everybody going against you,” he says. “When I speak about that, I break. I rage. Because I never asked to be there. I asked for help from everybody.”

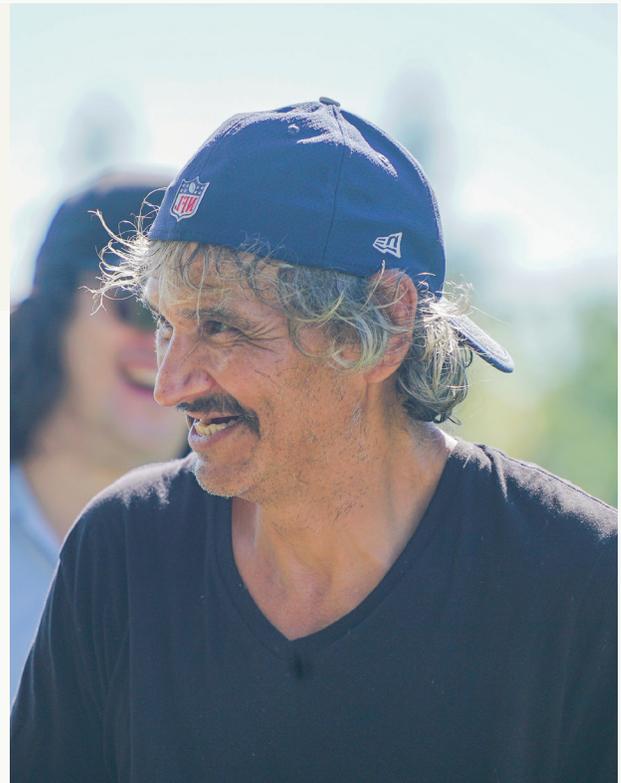
That help finally came through Bissell Centre. “The only thing that turned out to be good in the inner city was Bissell.” After nearly two decades on the street and a lifetime of addiction, Barry began his healing journey.

Moving into Hope Terrace, Bissell’s supportive housing for people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, gave Barry a chance to rest – but feeling safe took much longer. “It took me years to get used to it once I got housed,” he admits. “It’s not as easy as people may think it is.” The psychological toll of long-term homelessness lingered. “From the 18 years that I was out there, it took about seven years to feel... safe.”

Barry’s story is one of resilience, but also a powerful reminder: housing is only the beginning. Healing takes time, trust, and unwavering support.

“I don’t know anything about living, but I sure know a lot about surviving.”

– Barry, *Hope Terrace Resident*



A Future Where Everyone Has What They Need to Thrive



Louise Traynor and Johanna Knettig
Co-Chief Executive Officers

Imagine waking up in a strange place, cold, uncertain, and unseen. Being treated as a problem before being seen as a person.

Now imagine the opposite.

A community where everyone has a safe place to sleep, nourishing food to eat, meaningful work to do, and people to count on. Where care is unconditional, dignity is non-negotiable, and no one is left behind.

At Bissell, we don't see this as an unattainable dream. We believe it's a future worth fighting for, and one we can build together.

This isn't just urgent work. It's transformative. And it's only possible when people like you choose to act.

Because when someone finds hope at Bissell, they often go on to create it for others.

Together, we're not just offering services – we're shifting systems, building futures, and proving what's possible when a community refuses to look away.

Hope Starts with You

Ending poverty isn't a dream – it's a decision.

Every day at Bissell, lives are changed because someone like you decided to take action. Whether it's your first gift or a deeper commitment, your support fuels the hope, dignity, and connection that every person deserves.

This is your opportunity to be part of something transformational, to move beyond charity and into changemaking. Together, we can challenge injustice, spark hope, and show **what's possible when a community steps up with open eyes and open hearts.**

No matter how you choose to help, your generosity becomes part of someone's story of resilience and renewal.

Ways to Create Meaningful, Lasting Impact:

- **Make a transformational gift** to accelerate long-term solutions to poverty
- **Leave a legacy** of hope with a gift in your will
- **Donate gifts of securities** and maximize your impact
- **Make a corporate gift** that reflects your values and invests in community well-being
- **Give in honour or memory** of someone who inspires you
- **Set up a workplace campaign** and engage others in making a difference





The Ultimate Gift?

Trusting Us to Meet the Greatest Needs

Unrestricted gifts allow us to respond quickly, creatively, and compassionately.

When emergencies arise, these funds help us pivot without delay.

They fill the gaps between programs – and fuel the innovation to build what’s missing.

Your trust powers our boldest, most life-changing work.

“Unrestricted gifts are the reason we can act fast to meet people’s needs”

– Kendra Stoley, *Director of Housing Services*



Thank You for Believing in a Better Future

Together, we are building a community where everyone belongs.

This work isn't easy. But with you by our side, it's absolutely possible.

**Thank you for your belief, your generosity,
and your courage to imagine more.**

The future we're creating starts with you.

Contact us at

Engagement@BissellCentre.org

www.bissellcentre.org

780-423-2285

Reg Canadian Charity: 118810829RR0001

