

# WESLEY URBAN MINISTRIES MAJOR MILESTONES



1950s

In 1955, United Church members began a Sunday afternoon tea at Wesley United Church for elderly individuals living in poverty. Moved by compassion and a willingness to help, the volunteers offered meals, worship, clothing and recreational activities.



1970s

Visionary leaders within the United Church came together to determine Wesley's current and future roles regarding poverty in Hamilton's downtown core. This led to Wesley Urban Ministries becoming an incorporated organization in 1979, adding a new location at Napier Street.



1990s

Collaboration began with community agencies and governments to greatly increase services in health, housing, literacy and recreation. Fundraising events, Case for Kids Walk, Run, Ride and Wesley Open Golf Tournament were introduced and both continue today. A Ferguson Avenue North location opened, dedicated to Hamilton's chronically homeless.



2010s

By 2010, Wesley's Transitions to Home program was launched to help men experiencing long-term shelter use and homelessness to obtain and maintain housing, using a Housing First model. In 2013, Wesley opened a new location at 52 Catharine Street North, providing support to government sponsored refugees and increasing Wesley's leadership role with diverse communities.



1960s

The Wesley logo was born and programs quickly expanded into a wide range of services for the young and old, including a club for transient men, a recreational drop-in for youth, a mother's group, community meals and Christmas celebrations – many of which continue today.



1980s

While Wesley United Church closed its doors, Wesley Urban Ministries expanded community programming into multiple downtown locations, including a 129 Rebecca Street location that operated a variety of programs for the homeless.



2000s

New and innovative programming marked the 2000s. Wesley opened the Ontario Early Years Centre for families, as well as school age programs for children and a child care centre. Wesley Youth Housing for homeless youth and the Special Care Unit for individuals experiencing homelessness and alcoholism were also launched. By 2005, Wesley was operating over a dozen programs from six locations.



NOW

What began as a Sunday afternoon tea in 1955, has since transformed into over 30 different and diverse programs for children, youth, adults and seniors living in poverty throughout our community. Our recently updated logo is designed to display the comprehensive and continuous support we offer people of every age, gender and nationality.