



# MARGARET'S PLACE

## Hospice at St. Joseph's Villa

### *My name is Laura Hounsell...*

...and I live in the incredible community of Ancaster Heights with my two sons William and Jack. My husband David and I fell in love with the area 15 years ago and were excited to raise our family here. However, in January of 2015, the life we knew and imagined changed forever.

While teaching his grade six class, David collapsed and suffered a grand mal seizure. We later discovered multiple brain tumours caused the seizure, leading to his diagnosis of aggressive Stage 4 melanoma. His cancer had already progressed too far, and treatment would only slow the spread.

David decided to undergo chemotherapy and radiation with the wish to have more time with our children. After his first round of treatment as an inpatient, we were able to bring David home. I had romanticized what this might look like – my boys cuddling with their dad and spending quality family time together. That dream quickly turned into a nightmare. I was overwhelmed by the challenges of providing care while mothering our two boys, who were three and five years old at the time. **There was never a moment to just be a family.**

Within a short time of being home, David suffered a brain bleed and his condition rapidly declined. This brought us back to the hospital where we'd spend the next couple of months. I remember one day, in particular, **he asked to feel the sun on his face**; a seemingly simple request, but one that came with some challenges. I got him a wheelchair and looked for an area inside the hospital where the sun shone. The only spot was in front of a window that was in a busy, noisy hallway. At the time, I felt there had to be a better way.

Knowing the end was near, there was much discussion about the plan ahead. Hospice care was amongst those discussions. Given our first experience bringing David home, I knew our home was not a place for David's final days. I worried for the ever-lasting memories for myself and the boys. I wanted our home to carry as many happy memories as possible.

The hospital was a scary place for our children. Seeing their dad in pain – surrounded by doctors, nurses and machines – was a very frightening setting for them. Though we did our best to make his room feel like home by hanging photos and bringing bedding, our children still saw this space as intimidating. We put David on a waitlist for hospice as there were no beds available, but as his condition worsened, the opportunity for hospice slipped away.

On April 25, 2015, David succumbed to his cancer, just three months after his diagnosis. His battle was short but courageous.

When I was invited to tour Margaret's Place Hospice this summer, I was unprepared for the emotions I'd feel. As we moved through the entranceway, I was in awe of the natural textures and tones that made it feel like home. Floor-to-ceiling windows framed the beauty of the surrounding ravine; there was a true connectedness to something greater. I was overwhelmed with **what could have been**. So much thought and care has gone into planning this space; I only wish it had been available to our family when we needed it.

I can see now how our narrative would have been quite different at Margaret's Place. This is a much-needed service in our community; a place for families to create peaceful moments and memories in a beautiful setting surrounded by nature... **and lots of windows to feel the sunshine on your face.**



**Laura, Jack & Will**  
David's Loving Family



# Margaret's Place Hospice ...opening September 2021

*"We can't always change the outcome, but we can greatly affect the journey."*



The end of one's life is just as important as the beginning. It's a sacred journey needing care and compassion. Margaret's Place will be a haven for individuals nearing the end of their lives. It's a place where their families can journey with them in their final days, sharing laughter, hugs, tears and meaningful memories surrounded by a supportive team in a tranquil, natural setting.

With hospice opening around the corner, we must continue to rely on the support of our community to provide the essential needs of both long-term and hospice care not covered by the Ministry of Health.

Your Gift of Care directly impacts residents, families and loved ones during the most tender and difficult moments. Coming together in support of those requiring hospice care in our surrounding communities will ensure that residents receive the dignified care they deserve throughout their final journey.

Thank you for your support.

**Don Davidson**  
President & CEO



## ***You're Invited...***

Join us for a personal tour of Margaret's Place, prior to the start of admissions.

**Tour Dates: August 28 - September 1, 2021**

**Tour Times: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.**

Tours will be approximately 20 minutes. All current Public Health guidelines will be in place.

*Nestled on the Spring Creek Ravine, Margaret's Place is a 10-bed hospice accepting residents of all ages who are facing life-limiting illness. The tranquil setting of the hospice is reflected throughout its interior, including features like Douglas-fir columns, natural stone, floor-to-ceiling windows and state-of-the-art amenities to provide a serene experience for residents and their families.*



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