

# st. matt's

*where hope thrives*

## 2024 IMPACT REPORT





# 50 Years of Building Community

We are celebrating the past, staying grounded in the now, and paving the way for our future. A strong and guiding Strategic Plan continues to be the guiding light for us. It was created with broad input and guidance from our Strategic Planning Committee, which included representation from the Board, staff, and management. This Strategic Plan reflects our understanding of what our community values most about St. Matt's and addresses the opportunities and challenges we face in providing high-quality support to individuals and families experiencing economic barriers. Through the duration of our Plan, we will assess and deepen our approaches to our work, taking on a leadership role with an expanded group of community partners and actively engage more donors. St. Matt's is proud to use these strategies as our guiding lights.

**This Impact Report is our demonstration to you of how well we are doing in our quest.**

## We're 50—and looking forward.

**This year marks a major milestone: the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the incorporation of St. Matt's.**

To honour our legacy and embrace the future, we've rebranded to reflect where we've been and where we're headed. St. Matthew's House is now St. Matt's. With our new name comes a bold visual identity—including a striking new logo, updated tagline, and modernized colour palette. While the look has changed, our commitment remains the same: delivering life-changing support to those who need it most. Stay tuned as we roll out the celebratory carpet in 2025.



To stay in the loop about our 50th anniversary plans and our ongoing work, please follow us on social media!

 @smh\_hamilton

 SMHhamilton

## 50 Years... and Counting

*From the Chair of the Board, Mary Burnett*

Serving on St. Matt's Board has been one of the most meaningful roles of my life. Over the past six years, I've witnessed this organization meet enormous challenges with courage, care, and a shared commitment to doing what's right—even when the path wasn't easy.

At the start of my term, we faced tough financial realities that meant selling off several supportive housing homes. It wasn't a decision taken lightly, but we ensured those units stayed in the community by transferring them to another provider. Around the same time, we made the difficult choice to close our food bank—recognizing that emergency food relief alone wasn't enough. Instead, we launched food delivery for older adults and cooking classes in social housing communities—efforts that became vital during the pandemic.

COVID brought new pressures, including the request to take on a second child care centre. Experts advised against it, but we couldn't ignore the potential loss of spaces for local families. Today, St. Matt's at St. Peter's is thriving, and our partnership with Adelaide Hoodless Elementary continues to grow.

When our building at 412 Barton was deemed unsafe, we saw opportunity in the challenge. Inspired by a bold vision from our Executive Director, we decided to develop the site into supportive housing for Black and Indigenous seniors facing homelessness. That building is nearly complete, and thanks to partnerships with ACCA and HRIC, it will offer culturally-informed support and care.

In 2022, as homelessness surged, we joined with the City and the Diocese of Niagara to expand the Cathedral's drop-in café. It now operates six days a week, serving meals and connecting thousands to vital services. In 2024 alone, it welcomed over 57,000 visits and served 75,000 meals.

Behind the scenes, we've been strengthening both the organization and the board—especially our shared understanding of equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging. These values are the compass that guide every decision we make.

To our Executive Director, staff, volunteers, board, and supporters—thank you. Your vision, tenacity, and heart are what keep St. Matt's moving forward.

**Here's to 50 years of community. And here's to the next 50—together.**



*Chair of the Board Mary Burnett (right) and Executive Director Renée Wetselaar (left).*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mary Burnett'.

**Mary Burnett**  
Chair of the Board





One of our most popular programs matches low-income families and seniors with individual sponsors, families or groups looking for a meaningful way to give back to their community during the holiday season. It is an amazing team and friend building opportunity, with collaborators giving together to make an impact for our most deserving clients.

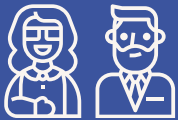
This past year was our best yet, with more than:



1,700  
Children



420  
Families



415  
Seniors



30  
Emergency Christmas  
Eve Appointments

## Social Services

Our Seniors Support Services and Street Outreach Team support vulnerable seniors (55+) and unhoused individuals in Hamilton. We address their diverse needs by connecting them to tax assistance, food banks, housing support, and medical care.

HOPES (Housing Outreach Preventing Evictions for Seniors) helps seniors maintain stable housing. Our unique anti-eviction program, in partnership with the Hamilton Community Legal Clinic, has prevented evictions, preserving affordable housing units and curbing rent increases. We deliver boxes of groceries to combat food insecurity and our year-round Mobile Fresh Food Market and SinKs (Seniors in Kitchens) programs ensure consistent access to healthy food for seniors.



82  
Safe Housing  
Interventions



506  
Referrals to  
Community Supports



3,045  
Boxes of  
Groceries



3,710  
Connections Made  
for Vulnerable Seniors

## Childcare

At St. Matt's, we take great joy in creating spaces where families feel secure - knowing their children are cared for in a nurturing, joyful environment. Our goal is to foster a deep sense of well-being and belonging, making each of our centres a welcoming haven for the children and families we serve.

Whether at St. Matt's Childcare Centre, St. Peter's at St. Matt's Daycare, or our Before-and-After School program at Adelaide Hoodless School, we work hand-in-hand with families to expand access and continually enhance our quality of care.

Our commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB), as well as ongoing Truth and Reconciliation training, is essential to the heart of our work. We're dedicated to building inclusive spaces where every child feels seen, valued, and celebrated. These efforts are made possible by our exceptional staff—whose compassion, energy, and care shape every child's experience.



235  
Children Enrolled



115  
Meals Served  
*lunches, per day*



1,480  
Educator Hours  
*per week*

## Cathedral Café

*Funded by the  
City of Hamilton.*

The Cathedral Café is a daytime welcome centre and a collaborative partnership between St. Matt's and Christ's Church Cathedral, alongside the Anglican Diocese of Niagara and the City of Hamilton.

The hub at Cathedral Place on James Street North, provides safe and supportive daytime drop-in space for homeless individuals and those at risk of homelessness. Guests are able to access seating, warmth, friendly welcoming faces, activities, programs and services such as health and ID clinics, pet supplies, wash-rooms and food, with the main focus being to provide breakfast and lunch daily—along with the simple need for a place to be.



57,893  
Visitors



75,935  
Meals Served



594  
Pet Supports





# Celebrating Partnerships with the City of Hamilton Housing Secretariat

The quest of 412 Barton is to provide deeply affordable homes so that 15 Indigenous and Black seniors at risk can thrive, alongside wraparound support. As an organization affiliated with the Anglican Church, which has a deep history in the residential school system, we see this as meaningful action toward truth and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. We also acknowledge the Black community's history of slavery and colonization, often supported by institutions like the Anglican Church, and aim to address this legacy as well.

The new building will include a community kitchen and social space, as well as a healing garden. It's intended that it will be a beautiful outdoor space where culturally appropriate-led programming can be offered, but also as a place where seniors who call 412 Barton home will be able to interact with children from the childcare program for multi-generational programs and activities. It will bring elders, seniors, and community partners together in friendship to contribute to the physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual well-being of Indigenous and Black older adults in Hamilton.



## Celebrating construction and partnership progress

In the journey to completion of the 412 Barton Project, we held a very special Commitment Ceremony in November 2024. The goal was to celebrate a construction milestone with a closed-in structure and the support from the City of Hamilton and the Housing Secretariat team in reaching this point.

The Ceremony shared in the acknowledgment of the past, learning in the present and commitment to a future of collective healing with respect and reconciliation. The celebration infused with respect, rituals and words that honour its future residents and the process to create these homes. St. Matt's was proud to honour City of Hamilton Housing Secretariat Justin Lewis and the team at the City of Hamilton Housing Secretariat in the shared commitment to Truth and Reconciliation and rights for the Black Community.

More than 50 people, including Justin Lewis and the team from the Housing Secretariat, Bishop Bell of the Anglican Diocese, Bishop Crosby of the Catholic Diocese, partners and collaborators from the Afro-Canadian and Indigenous communities, our development and construction partners from New Commons Development, Assembly and Jackman Construction as well as St. Matt's staff, stood in acknowledgment of the journey to this point in the 412 Barton journey, and everyone signed the walls inside the front door, so the community support is literally built into the structure and future homes.





# Fundraising Initiatives

## Walk for St. Matt's

One of the new ideas that we saw in 2024 was the Walk for St. Matt's, in collaboration with the Workers Arts and Heritage Centre. Walkers stepped into the vibrant tapestry of Hamilton's North End with the family-friendly event, where history came alive through an enchanting walk-ing tour. Participants enjoyed uncovering the captivating tales woven into the very fabric of this journey, exploring a community that is the heart and soul of Hamilton.

Participants raised more than \$12,000, well ahead of the \$10,000 goal, and all to support the multitude of programs and services that St. Matt's offers.



## Building Homes Through Rock and Roll

The Holk Family passionately believes in the power of community and the magic of music in bring-ing people together. How fortunate then, that they are patrons of St. Matt's and its 412 Barton project. In May 2024, the family staged an epic evening of rock and roll tribute, a powerful show-case of the most iconic acts in rock music history. From the triumphant Tina Turner to the mes-merizing charm of Freddie Mercury, with the exuberant stylings of Rod Stewart to the harmonious tunes of the Bee Gees, the tribute artists gave unforgettable journey through life's soundtrack.

**ROCK REVIVAL: Building Homes for Seniors at Risk** had more than 500 people rocking out and helping build deeply affordable homes for their neighbours. St. Matt's is so grateful for the Holk family.



# Donor Impact

We are deeply grateful to our funders and individual and corporate donors whose support makes it possible for us to provide innovative, person-directed services to those who need them most. In these challenging and ever-changing times, your continued generosity and confidence in St. Matt's mean more than ever. Thank you for helping hope thrive.

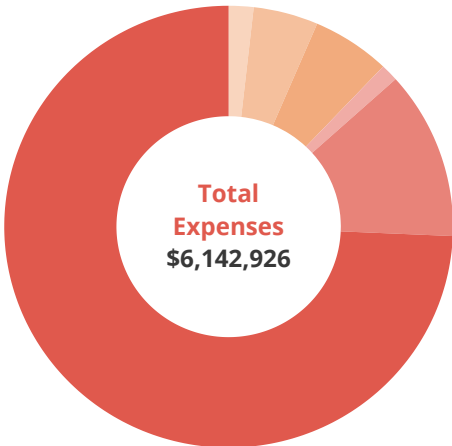
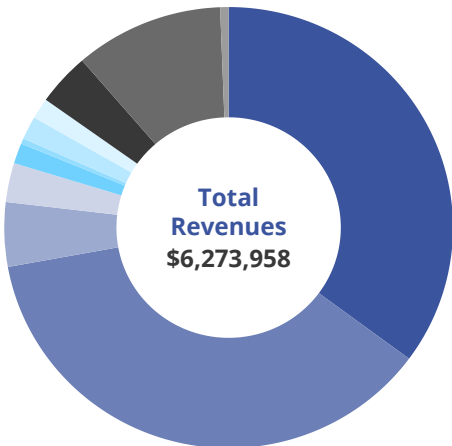
| Total Value    | # of Transactions | Average Transaction |
|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| \$2,616,206.23 | 10,037            | \$260.66            |

# Financial Report

Revenues for the 12 months ending December 31, 2024 were \$6,273,958 versus \$3,733,361 for the 9 months ending December 31, 2023. Expenditures for 2024 were \$6,142,926 versus \$3,518,108 for the prior 9-month period. The higher revenues and expenditures are primarily attributable to the full year operation of the Cathedral Café in 2024. In the prior year, the Cathedral Café was operational for just one month. Excess of revenues over expenditures from operations for 2024 was \$131,032 compared to \$215,253 for the prior 9-month period.

### Rob Gibson, Treasurer

|   | 2024<br>(12 months) | 2023<br>(9 months) |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>REVENUES</b>   |                     |                    |
| City of Hamilton - Child Care program                   | 2,204,272           | 1,622,266          |
| City of Hamilton - Other programs                       | 2,321,646           | 812,853            |
| Provincial Government                                   | 295,824             | 215,253            |
| Hamilton Community Foundation                           | 179,817             | 60,754             |
| Ontario Trillium Foundation                             | 93,858              | 57,451             |
| United Way  | 24,657              | 56,250             |
| Other Contributions                                     | 107,018             | 46,937             |
| Amortization of deferred capital contributions          | 95,753              | 62,994             |
| Donations   | 240,589             | 270,836            |
| Childcare Fees  | 672,506             | 476,540            |
| Interest  | 38,018              | 51,227             |
| <b>Total Revenues</b>                                   | <b>\$6,273,958</b>  | <b>\$3,733,361</b> |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>   |                     |                    |
| Amortization of capital assets                          | 109,863             | 91,741             |
| Building occupancy and rent                             | 286,833             | 207,595            |
| Office and administration                               | 346,310             | 216,090            |
| Professional fees                                       | 77,708              | 149,177            |
| Program expenses  | 756,449             | 308,004            |
| Salaries and benefits                                   | 4,565,763           | 2,545,501          |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                                   | <b>\$6,142,926</b>  | <b>\$3,518,108</b> |
| <b>Excess of revenues over expenses from operations</b> | <b>\$131,032</b>    | <b>\$215,253</b>   |



# The Beginning of the Next 50 Years

**Updated Website:** To support our organization in communicating with our partners and participants, a refreshed and invigorated website will follow along the newly launched brand in enhancing communications and impact.

**412 Barton Opening:** The dream will become a reality when the 412 Barton Project welcomes its first residents later this year. Watch for the Grand Opening Ceremony and a new era of client support from St. Matt's.

**50th Anniversary Celebration:** A celebration of 50 Years of Community Building is taking place on November 27, 2025 at The Studio in downtown Hamilton. A trip through the decades and the impact that St. Matt's has made will be a transcendent trip through time and accomplishment... and there may be some disco balls. Watch our socials for details over the summer!



## Land and African Ancestral Acknowledgment

We would like to acknowledge that the land upon which we reside is the traditional ancestral territories of the Mississauga, Haudenosaunee and Anishanaabe nations, and within the lands protected by the “Dish with One Spoon” wampum agreement.

For many thousands of years, the first people sought to walk gently on this land. We seek a new relationship with the original peoples, one based in honour and deep respect. We acknowledge all our ancestors that have walked and stewarded these lands before us and those that continue to walk with us on this journey to a more harmonious world.

It is important to also acknowledge the generations of people of African descent who were forcibly brought to this land and displaced around the world, as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade. In Canada, we have a history of slavery of Black and Indigenous people, and exploitation and internment of other groups. We are committed to continually acting in support of and in solidarity with all communities seeking freedom and reparative justice in light of the history and ongoing legacy of slavery that continues to impact communities in Canada.

We have gratitude for the opportunity to engage in and demonstrate leadership on reconciliation, in embracing diversity, and in helping everyone thrive, which is what we aim to do in St. Matt's through our programs and practices.

# 2024 Board of Directors

**Mary Burnett**  
Chair

**Val Kerr**  
Vice Chair

**Robert Gibson**  
Treasurer

**Bishop Susan Bell**  
Ex-Officio

**Brent Bentham**

**Melanee McAulay**

**Ian Mobsby**

**Ellen Morris**

**Ekene Okwumo**

**Lil Scime**

**Executive Director:** Renée Wetselaar

Thank you to all staff, volunteers, and committee members who make St. Matt's a place to thrive.

# Funders, Partners & Supporters







**Our Build Hope program increases your impact.**

Monthly contributions are the key to helping us move beyond crisis management, band-aid solutions, and short-term fixes. Monthly donorship supports our organizational sustainability, giving St. Matt's the means to provide dependable, ongoing support to those we serve.

**To learn more or to donate, please visit:**

[www.stmatthewshouse.ca/donate](http://www.stmatthewshouse.ca/donate)

**By Mail:** 414 Barton St E, Hamilton, ON L8L 2Y3

**By Phone:** 905-523-5546 Ext.230

**By Email:** [admin@stmatthewshouse.ca](mailto:admin@stmatthewshouse.ca)

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*Most photography in the St. Matt's 2024 Impact Report graciously taken by Tim McKenna.*