



THE CATHEDRAL CENTER ANNUAL REPORT

2024

*Supporting Women and Families to Rebuild Their
Lives Since 2002.*

www.cathedral-center.org



Cathedral Center, Inc



@cathedralcenter



The Cathedral Center, Inc



ABOUT

Located in downtown Milwaukee, The Cathedral Center offers safety and support for our community's most vulnerable through five programs focused on moving women and families to housing stability with compassion and dignity. We began in the mid-1990s as a church-based overflow shelter for women and families, becoming a nonprofit in 2002. Now, we provide case management, job programs, and youth support. Our Flexible Housing model, utilized at Friendship House, offers longer-term emergency housing tailored to individual needs. We house up to 16 families and 32 women nightly and support over 25 women and 40–50 families through our Community Case Management services.

MISSION

Cathedral Center's mission is to provide a safe environment for women and families with children while working to end homelessness, one life at a time.

VISION

Through compassionate care and excellence in service delivery, Cathedral Center will serve as a leader in ending homelessness for women and families with children in Milwaukee. Cathedral Center envisions a community in which women and families with children are empowered to access support to meet all of their basic needs.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



For over 22 years Cathedral Center has been ensuring women and families with children have a safe place to sleep when faced with homelessness or housing crisis. We knew it would not be right to just give them a safe place to sleep, though. We added programs and services to support our guests to move past the trauma of homelessness, increase their income and secure safety beyond our shelter walls. More recently, we added support specifically for children and have built our community case management program to offer support to those who can be helped to avoid shelter in the first place.

We offer more programs and services, enabling us to serve women and families through a broader array of touch points. We can cite research and best practices to demonstrate that the way we provide services is the most effective. Yet, I often wish I could know how a particular person is doing after they have left our programs. The stories of our women and families is what brings us fulfillment and re-energizes us to our mission. But we don't always get to hear or tell the stories – because the stories are actual lives and they are not ours to share.

Still... every now and again I get to see how effective our services are and have been. In 2024, I found myself in the middle of unplanned moments with women who have benefited from Cathedral Center's services in the past and who are all now past that housing crisis. I met three different women from three different eras of Cathedral Center's history – all of them are working professionals and all of them recall their time with us with smiles and gratitude.

Those meetings meant a lot to me. It's not for me to share their personal stories, but I hope sharing this much brings the message to all of you how important your support and partnership is to so many.

Now – more than ever before – we need to maintain progress and fight for the most compassionate response to homelessness we can. We need our full continuum of services in Milwaukee to stay alive and accessible to all: prevention, emergency shelter, supportive services, rapid rehousing, permanent and affordable housing and health and nutrition programs.

Thank you, as always, for partnering with us to ensure our women and families continue to receive the critical basic needs services they need and deserve.

Together in service,

Donna Rongholt-Migan
Executive Director



Liz Sellars, Donna Rongholt-Migan, and Christy Schmidt at Glitz & Glam.



Donna Rongholt-Migan and Lyn Hildenbrand at the AAUW Luncheon.



Suzy Frazier (2019 Woman of the Word), Donna Rongholt-Migan, Jeanette Dvorak (2024 Woman of the Word), and Karen Dubis (2014 Woman of the Word) at Pathway Home 2024.

FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT



I remember searching for my first apartment and following the age-old rule: never spend more than a third of your income on rent. But for too many today, that guideline is an unrealistic goal. With the soaring cost of housing—and a severe shortage of affordable options—many Americans now spend 60-70% of their gross income just to keep a roof over their heads. That leaves no financial cushion for life’s unexpected turns: a broken-down car, a new baby, or a medical emergency.

Shockingly, nearly half of today’s record-high homeless population consists of people who are working—often at multiple jobs. Yet, even with full-time hours, minimum wage doesn’t come close to covering the cost of a modest two-bedroom apartment anywhere in the country. As author Brian Goldstone states, “‘Working homeless’ should be an unspeakable phrase, as it is a profound betrayal of the nation’s implicit social contract. Work hard, keep your head down, obey the law, and you should be able to get the basics of a good life—or at least an apartment—for you and your family.”

At The Cathedral Center, we meet so many guests who once had stable housing, but rising costs have outpaced income they’ve relied on for years. We’re here to help them rebuild—to find stability again, or in some cases, to discover it for the first time. Through our programs, we’ve helped thousands of women and families secure safe, sustainable housing by increasing their income, strengthening their employment opportunities, and connecting them with essential resources. And perhaps most encouraging, in the past two years, our prevention programs have kept hundreds of people from becoming homeless in the first place.

Disheartened by the dismantling of federal housing agencies and a lack of incentives to build affordable homes, we remain deeply grateful for your compassion toward those who have fallen on hard times. Your continued support enables us to restore lives with dignity and achieve meaningful, lasting change. We at The Cathedral Center remain steadfast in our mission. We believe, without compromise, that every person deserves a safe place to call home.

Sincerely,

Liz Sellars
Board President



Liz and Tom Sellars (Presenting Sponsors) at Pathway Home 2024.



Jeanette Dvorak (2024 Woman of the Word), Mayor Cavalier Johnson, and Shamill Goodwin (2024 INSPIRE Honoree) at Pathway Home 2024.

CATHEDRAL CENTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers:

- Liz Sellars
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- Pat Hickey
VICE PRESIDENT
- Tony Tagliavia
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Patti Dew
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Donna Rongholt-Migan

A PARTNERSHIP OF:

- Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
- Friendship House

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

EMERGENCY SHELTER

The Cathedral Center's Emergency Shelter offers immediate, life-saving access to a safe, welcoming place to sleep for women and families experiencing homelessness. Our shelter is more than a place to rest—it's a dignified entry point to comprehensive services that support guests in their journey toward stability and long-term housing.

Key elements of our Emergency Shelter include:

- » Serving as a vital gateway to a network of community resources.
- » Welcoming guests referred through Coordinated Entry, outreach teams, and law enforcement.
- » Providing short-term accommodations when faced with homelessness and housing crises for up to 90 days.
- » Partnering with Case Managers to develop and work toward individualized goals.
- » Fostering participation in supportive programs that promote progress toward permanent housing.
- » Uplifting the resilience, courage, and determination of women and families—often navigating exhaustion, trauma, and crisis—with strength and hope.

CASE MANAGEMENT

At the heart of The Cathedral Center's mission is our dedicated team of experienced Case Managers, who work one-on-one with each guest using a proven model that fosters successful, individualized outcomes. Through compassionate guidance and strategic support, Case Management empowers guests to take meaningful steps toward lasting stability.

Key components of Case Management include:

- » Conducting comprehensive assessments to better understand each guest's unique needs and circumstances.
- » Creating an Individualized Plan for Independence (IPI) that focuses on increasing income, obtaining safe and stable housing, and improving overall well-being.
- » Recognizing personal strengths while addressing barriers that may hinder progress.
- » Building connections to essential community resources, including housing, healthcare, employment, and financial support services.

The Cathedral Center's Emergency Shelter Outcomes



16,395 Nights of Shelter were Provided to Women & Families with Children in 2024



238 Unaccompanied Women Were Provided Emergency Shelter in 2024



65 Families Comprised of 205 Adults & Children Received Emergency Shelter in 2024

The Cathedral Center's Case Management Outcomes



72% of All Women & Families Exited Our Emergency Shelter to Safe Placements in 2024



159 Unaccompanied Women (67%) Found Safe Placement via Case Management in 2024



56 Families with Children (86%) Also Found Safe Placement via Case Management in 2024

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

FRIENDSHIP HOUSE

When the typical 90-day shelter stay is not enough, The Cathedral Center's Flexible Emergency Housing Program at Friendship House provides extended support for women and families with children who need more time to heal and prepare for a safe, stable future. This program is a vital bridge for guests transitioning from emergency shelter to permanent housing.

Key features of Friendship House include:

- » Offering extended time for recovery and preparation for long-term housing stability.
- » Tailoring lengths of stay to meet individual needs, ranging from 30 days to several months.
- » Providing consistent support from a dedicated clinical Case Manager.
- » Hosting weekly trauma support groups to foster healing and resilience.
- » Connecting guests to on-site and community resources, including the Employment Services Program and other essential partner services.
- » Collaborates with Milwaukee CPS to support families navigating reunification with compassion and care.

COMMUNITY CASE MANAGEMENT (CCM)

The Cathedral Center's Community Case Management (CCM) program is designed to prevent homelessness before it begins. By combining strategic case management with growing partnerships among local landlords, this program supports women and families with children in maintaining or securing safe housing while working toward greater stability.

Key components of CCM include:

- » Access to Community Case Managers who provide personalized guidance and support.
- » Comprehensive assessments to inform an Individualized Plan for Independence (IPI).
- » Targeted assistance to overcome barriers by connecting them to community resources that help clients increase income, stabilize or secure housing, and improve their overall well-being.
- » Referrals to our Employment Services Program, offering women and parents the tools and support to pursue strategic career goals and build financial independence.
- » Provides in-kind support to help households stretch their resources and focus on saving for housing stability.

The Cathedral Center's Friendship House Outcomes



6 Unaccompanied Women Received Basic Needs in a Safe, Welcoming Environment in 2024



8 Families with Children Also Received Basic Needs in a Safe, Welcoming Environment in 2024



100% of All Exits Left to Safe Housing, Most with Financial Savings to Avoid Future Crises

The Cathedral Center's Community Case Management Outcomes



35 Unaccompanied Women Were Served in the Community by Our Community Case Managers in 2024



74 Families with Children Were Also Served in 2024



106 Women & Families (97%) Stabilized Housing & Resolved Housing Crises to Avoid the Need for Emergency Shelter

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



Breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty requires more than immediate solutions—it demands long-term strategies. At The Cathedral Center, we recognize that for many women and families, the urgency of crisis leaves little room for future planning. Our Employment Services Program helps bridge that gap by equipping clients with the tools, support, and connections needed to build sustainable financial independence.

Key parts of the Employment Services Program include:

- » Individual assessments to identify strengths, challenges, establish strategic employment goals, and pursue meaningful careers to increase earned income.
- » Educational resources focused on resume development, soft skills, job readiness, employment searches, and interview preparation.
- » Access to technology that aids in job research and creation of essential documents.
- » Opportunities to engage in one-on-one sessions, peer support groups, and workshops with community and employer partners.
- » Partner with over 30 employers to create successful employment connections for our clients.

The Cathedral Center's Employment Services Outcomes



25 Women & 7 Families Increased Income Through Engaging Employee Partners and Participating in Personal Skills Trainings in 2024.

CHILD & YOUTH SERVICES

At The Cathedral Center, we recognize that family stability begins with supporting every member of the household—including the youngest ones. Our Child & Youth Program is designed to meet the unique needs of children and youth staying in our Emergency Shelter, while also empowering parents to fully engage in the supportive services available to them.

Key features of the Child & Youth Program include:

- » Facilitating engaging, age-appropriate programming in a dedicated, child-friendly space.
- » Providing supervised play and psychoeducational activities during non-school hours.
- » Offering financial and service support for access to safe, reliable community childcare.
- » Encouraging parental involvement to strengthen family bonds during times of crisis.
- » Reducing childcare-related barriers that may prevent parents from participating in case management, employment services, and other critical programming.



EVENTS AND APPEALS



The Cathedral Center's "Empowerment Challenge" ran from March 1 - 8, International Women's Day. We challenged the community to join us in empowering women by donating to support our services that provide opportunities for women and families to begin their journey out of homelessness or housing crises. The Godfrey Family Foundation and Peter Geisert matched all donations up to \$25,000 and thanks to everyone's efforts, a total of \$53,310 was raised to empower women.



Mainstream Boutique and Access Boutique hosted our annual sip and shop event that supports Cathedral Center's services for women and families experiencing homelessness or housing crisis. Glitz & Glam was held on the Thursday before Mother's Day, May 9. Attendees who gave a \$20 donation at the door were able to shop while being treated to wine, snacks, a wallet pull, and a raffle. All donations plus 15-20% of the proceeds helped fund employment services.



The Cathedral Center hosted our annual Pathway Home event on July 24, 2024, at the Best Place at the Historic Pabst Brewery in the Great Hall. This heartwarming evening celebrated community leaders who support programs that end homelessness by honoring Jeanette Dvorak as our 2024 Woman of the Word and celebrating a former client for their her success and perseverance. The night included a silent auction, 50/50, wine pull, food, drinks, music, and a moving program to make for a special night for all who make Cathedral Center's work possible. Pathway Home was co-chaired by board members; Tony Tagliavia, Julia Fennelly, and Bill Klingsporn and made possible by our Presenting Sponsors; Johnson Financial Group, Peter Geisert, and Liz & Tom Sellars.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers are the heart of The Cathedral Center. Through our Volunteer Program, individuals from across the community are woven into the very fabric of our mission—bringing compassion, energy, and dedication to every corner of our work. Volunteers are trained to work alongside staff, offering essential support that enhances our services and strengthens our community impact.



Highlights of the Volunteer Program include:

- » Opportunities to contribute in a variety of areas, including reception, shelter support, and the Hospitality Meal Program.
- » The Hospitality Meal Program is critical to providing daily nutrition to clients, 365 days a year, ensuring no one is left hungry.
- » Comprehensive training to ensure volunteers are well-prepared to serve with empathy and effectiveness.
- » A powerful impact on operations—reducing expenses, extending the capacity of our staff, and enriching program engagement for our guests.



This is truly a community effort. We are deeply grateful to every individual who shares their time, talents, and resources in support of women and families on their journey to stability.

Thank you to the 414 volunteers who contributed 2,868 hours of service and being an essential part of our mission!

2024 HONOR ROLL & MEMORIALS

Thank you to the donors who make our work possible! Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this report. The Honor Roll contains contributions during 2024. Please contact the Resource Development Team at ebarbian@cathedral-center.org with any corrections.

\$50,000+

Bader Philanthropies
Friendship House of Milwaukee
Hunger Task Force
Jim Fitzpatrick Foundation
United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County
Zilber Family Foundation

\$25,000 - \$49,999

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\$10,000 - \$24,999

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Zonta Foundation, Inc. of the Zonta Club of Milwaukee

\$1,000 - \$2,499

All Saints' Cathedral
American Association of University Women
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Bob's Discount Furniture Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Catherine & Robert Kwapick
Charles D. Ortgiesen Foundation
Chris & Lori Harris
Constance Tresch
Cynthia & Crayon Efrid
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Donna Rongholt-Migan & Nick Migan
Eagles for Children/Local Impact Alliance
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Foley and Lardner LLP
Forward Please Project
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Gary Marvin & Laura AnnMarie Ruesch
Greater Milwaukee Association of Realtors Youth Foundation Inc.
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\$500 - \$999

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 St. Vincent Pallotti
 Steve and Kristen Thomas
 The Catholic Faith Community of St. William
 Thomas P. & Karen A. Guskowski
 U.S. Bank Foundation

\$250 - \$499

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 Bill & Lorraine Buehler
 Bill Staudenmaier
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 Bob & Judy Scott
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\$100 - \$249

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Annual Report 2024

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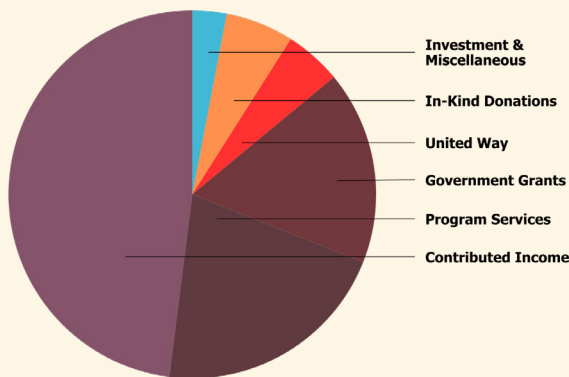
Darryl & Mary Beth Draeger

John & Linda Steinbrecker

In Memory of Sandra A. Schultz

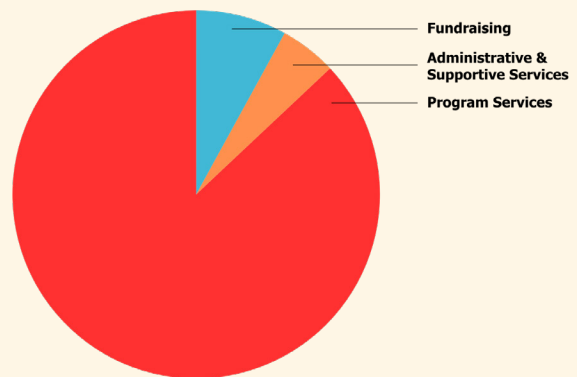
Jackie & Chris Mortenson

2024 Financial Report



Revenues:

Investment & Miscellaneous \$101,327 - 3%
 In-Kind Donations \$200,929 - 6%
 United Way \$159,107 - 5%
 Government Grants \$548,484 - 17%
 Program Services \$646,214 - 21%
 Contributions \$1,496,209 - 48%
Total Revenue \$3,149,270



Expenses:

Fundraising \$214,256 - 8%
 Administrative & Supportive Services \$152,254 - 5%
 Program Services \$2,386,428 - 87%
Total Expenses \$2,752,938

Change in Net Assets \$396,332
 Beginning of Year \$2,689,982
 End of Year \$3,086,314

**Net asset change reflects funds received in 2024 and released for use in 2025.*

BECOME PART OF THE SOLUTION!

With over 20 years of successful work to end homelessness for women and families with children, we are proud of our collaborations, building on existing resources in our community. We are partners with you and are grateful to you.

To get involved:

- Make a Donation on our website at www.cathedral-center.org/donate
- Volunteer with Cathedral Center
- Participate in our Hospitality Meal Program
- Learn More: Visit our website www.cathedral-center.org/donate or join our email list

To learn more about other ways to get involved, contact Evan Barbian at ebarbian@cathedral-center.org or (414) 831-0394, ext. 2109.



THE CATHEDRAL CENTER

Working to end homelessness, one life at a time.

Emergency Shelter
845 N Van Buren St
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Sattelite Office
710 N Plankinton Ave, Suite 803
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Friendship House
1029 N Marshall St
Milwaukee, WI 53203

