ST. FELIX CENTRE
Care. Compassion. Community.

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



The Future is Hope

St. Felix Centre is a Felician-Sponsored Ministry

TABLE OF CONTENTS

03. Message from The Board of Directors

05. Message from The Senior Leadership Team

06. Felician Sisters: A Legacy of Hope

08. 2024 Highlights

09. From Guest to Staff:
Paula's Testimonial

11. 24-Hour Respite: Empowering Hope & Changing Lives

13. Turning Hope Into Action: The Power of Casework at St. Felix Centre

15. From Housing to Home:
A Journey of Hope

17. Together in Hope: The Impact of Community Engagement

19. RHI Capital Campaign:
Help Us Build Hope House

21. 2023-2024 Major Donors

22. 2023-2024 Finances

23. 2023-2024 St. Felix Centre Board of Directors

23. Our Coldest Night of the Year Fundraiser

24. Stay in Touch

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Influenced by the current socio-political atmosphere—that seems to recurringly include a constant rejection and demonizing of community members who are unhoused—I could focus this message in expressing my frustration and disappointment of that sad challenge of today's society.

However, that focus would not have shared the full story and, to fully represent the feeling of the Board of St. Felix Centre in my message—my first as the Chair—I chose to focus on **a message of hope and the joy** of seeing what we are achieving here at St. Felix Centre. I know that there are so many who are trying to do what needs to be done, one meal, one bed, one smile at a time.



That is what we are here to do. **We serve. We hope. And we build.** We are almost ready to open doors on a dream - Hope House, our multi-unit housing project for women and their children.

The late Irish poet Seamus Heaney tells us in his poem The Gravel Walks to "**walk on air against your better judgment**". It is a poem about heavy labour and how hard work can paradoxically bring a sense of lightness that comes when we are carrying the "right" burdens.

Those of us who work with, or support St. Felix Centre must remember we too are lifting heavy things. It probably feels insurmountable on many days for our team, yet we do not hear that very often from them. **We hear hope, determination, and mission.**

The work of St. Felix Centre - of which I am privileged to be a small but proud part - is hard. There is much to do. The staff are beyond committed; I only get a glimpse of the challenges that they face. Our Board of Directors and Committee Members are devoted to what we are trying to achieve. Those of you who are reading this care for our work too—through a donation, a volunteer effort, a supporter of one of our events, or simply seeing the world around you with a compassionate eye and a belief that we can make a difference. It may not be seismic—yet—but **if we look up, we are reminded that marvelous things can exist alongside the onerous ones.**

We are grateful for your attention, your guidance, and, of course, your support. **Together, we make HOPE a reality.** So please, walk on air against your better judgment. **We need you.**

Bernadette Lonergan
Chair, Board of Directors



MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Hope can be a tricky thing. It can be very, very hard to hold on to and very easy to lose. One of the main goals that St. Felix Centre has always had, is to find ways to help those who access our services to **envision a better future and to help them regain their hope**.



While we work each day to find those opportunities, we inevitably encounter a variety of challenges and that can really impact our own sense of hope. Putting together these reports gives us a good opportunity to reflect on all the diverse kinds of challenges that we've faced, and what stands out is that we overcame them through the strength of our community. Throughout the year, no matter what challenges we saw, invariably when we reached out for help from our community, they always found a way to support us. Knowing that we've got this **incredible network of supporters** available to us not only provides us relief when we're facing challenges, but now when we reflect on the year, it **gives us an incredible sense of hope that we can overcome any challenge that comes up!**



Finally, it inspires us to work to ensure that **we're paying that support forward to our guests and community** so that when someone who accesses our services faces a challenge that they too feel that they have a diverse network from whom they can get help. Our goal is to have our guests feel that same sense of relief and community as we feel – that no matter what happens they can reach out and be confident that their community will be there.

By working to find ways to expand the range and capacity of services that we offer – from **more support on the front lines** to **deepening community partnerships** to **expanded ranges of housing options** – we're committed to continuing to work to create opportunities for everyone who accesses St Felix Centre to find hope.

From our guests to program staff all the way through to the senior leadership team, we all have moments where the challenges we face can lead us to lose hope. **By focusing on collaboration and really leaning into our communities, we can continue to work towards a better future for everyone – and the future is hope!**

FELICIAN SISTERS : A LEGACY OF HOPE



As we reflect on our current projects and the hopeful future we envision, it's important to look back at what brought us to this point. **150 years ago,** the Felician Sisters came to North America and put into motion what would become the **vast and diverse group of ministries** that now span the continent, including St Felix Centre.

Among the many important things the Sisters accomplished, one of the most impactful has been the strong foundation upon which our current work is built. At the heart of that work are our **Core Values** for Ministry which include: **Respect for Human Dignity, Solidarity with Those in Need, Transformation, Compassion** and **Justice & Peace.**

Finally, blessed Mother Angela's message to "serve where needed" is a call to hopefulness. Those first Sisters who braved the Atlantic crossing and all of the hardships and uncertainty, brought with them **hope for the future**. Now, all these years later, it is our privilege to be able to **carry that call forward and continue the legacy** that the Sisters created by continuing to **evolve and expand our services to meet the most pressing needs in the communities in which we work**.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

24-Hour Respite

Our sites maintained 24/7 operation, providing access to a safe and welcoming co-ed space to rest for 72 people per night.

Community Meals

We served on avg. 11,742 meals/month. The program provided support to all community members who came to SFC asking for a warm meal.

St. Felix House

16 women resided in our transitional home for women. We were able to help 6 residents transition into permanent housing. The program offers: One Stop Program, life skills workshops, casework & housing support.

Casework & Housing

We were able to help 10 guests transition into permanent housing. Our team provides access to crisis & mental health supports, housing casework, addiction & detox support, funding support, and more.

P.A.W.S.

P.A.W.S. provides our guests with the opportunity to apply for financial support to access emergency veterinary care for their pets. 9 applications were supported.

Volunteers

SFC received the support of 67 corporate volunteers for a total of 25 volunteer hours.

FROM GUEST TO STAFF: PAULA'S TESTIMONIAL

When I arrived in Canada as a Refugee, the first place I stayed at was St. Felix Centre. At first it wasn't easy to leave behind a home, but slowly, **St. Felix became more than just a place to live; it became my family**. The staff were my guiding lights, and they took me under their wings. They taught be resilience and kindness. Eventually St. Felix Centre became my home - a place where I learned that strength came from embracing challenges.



While staying at the Centre, I took various courses and acquired some certifications that allowed me to gain employment. I also successfully applied ad received approvals to move into permanent housing! Leaving St. Felix Centre was bittersweet - **I was excited about my future** but I knew I would miss the place that shaped my life so profoundly.

I continued to work hard, juggling studies and part-time jobs, always with the goal of one day **returning to St. Felix, not as a resident but as a staff member.**

"My journey from being a resident to a staff member...was a testament to the power of resilience and giving back."

– Paula

A year passed, an my determination paid off – I earned my certifications in Social Work and returned to SFC, this time in the role of a Respite Support Staff. The transition was emotional; seeing familiar faces and realizing that I was no longer a recipient of care, but a staff member, **ready to make a difference**.

My first day back to SFC was a whirlwind of excitement and nerves. As I walked through the hallway, I felt the weight of my new responsibilities. I met residents, some of whom were old friends/ house mates, and others who were new to the Centre.

I used my own experiences to connect with them, offering guidance and support that came from a place of understanding. Each time a guest came up to me for help, I saw a reflection of myself in them. I used my **empathy and encouragement** to help them open up and gain confidence, constantly **striving to provide guests with the same warmth and support I once received from the same community**.

My journey from being a resident to a staff member at St. Felix was a testament to the **power of resilience and giving back.** I had come full circle, transforming my own struggles into a source of strength for others. As I looked around at the vibrant St. Felix community, I knew that my experiences at the Centre had not only changed my life but had allowed me to create change in the lives of others as well.

24-HOUR RESPITE: EMPOWERING HOPE & CHANGING LIVES

The 24-Hour Service program has played an essential role in supporting some of the most vulnerable members of our community this year. By introducing innovative strategies, we have simplified and enhanced our service delivery, ensuring **greater accessibility** and **comfort** for those in need. These efforts reflect our commitment to ensuring that every individual who seeks our support feels recognized, valued, and cared for.

Our team's dedication to providing round-the-clock support has been critical in addressing the immediate needs of our guests with **compassion** and **understanding**. We have cultivated a safe, welcoming environment where individuals can find solace and security during challenging times. Whether offering a warm meal, a listening ear, or a place to rest, we consistently prioritize treating everyone with **dignity** and **respect**.



The Future is Hope

Remaining deeply connected to our mission, we have strengthened our community support through partnerships and outreach initiatives. Collaborating with like-minded organizations and adapting to the diverse needs of our guests has allowed us to turn obstacles into opportunities for growth. **Our work goes beyond meeting basic needs; it is about inspiring hope and creating pathways toward a better future.**

The unwavering dedication of our frontline staff deserves special recognition. They continue to make an extraordinary impact on the lives of our guests, offering encouragement and fostering resilience, faith, and optimism. Their compassionate approach helps individuals face adversity with courage and maintain hope during their journey.

In 2024, the 24-Hour Service program has not only been a source of practical support but also a **beacon of hope** for those we serve. Together, through **innovation, action, and collaboration,** we remain committed to **empowering our community** and **creating meaningful change** as we move into 2025 and beyond.



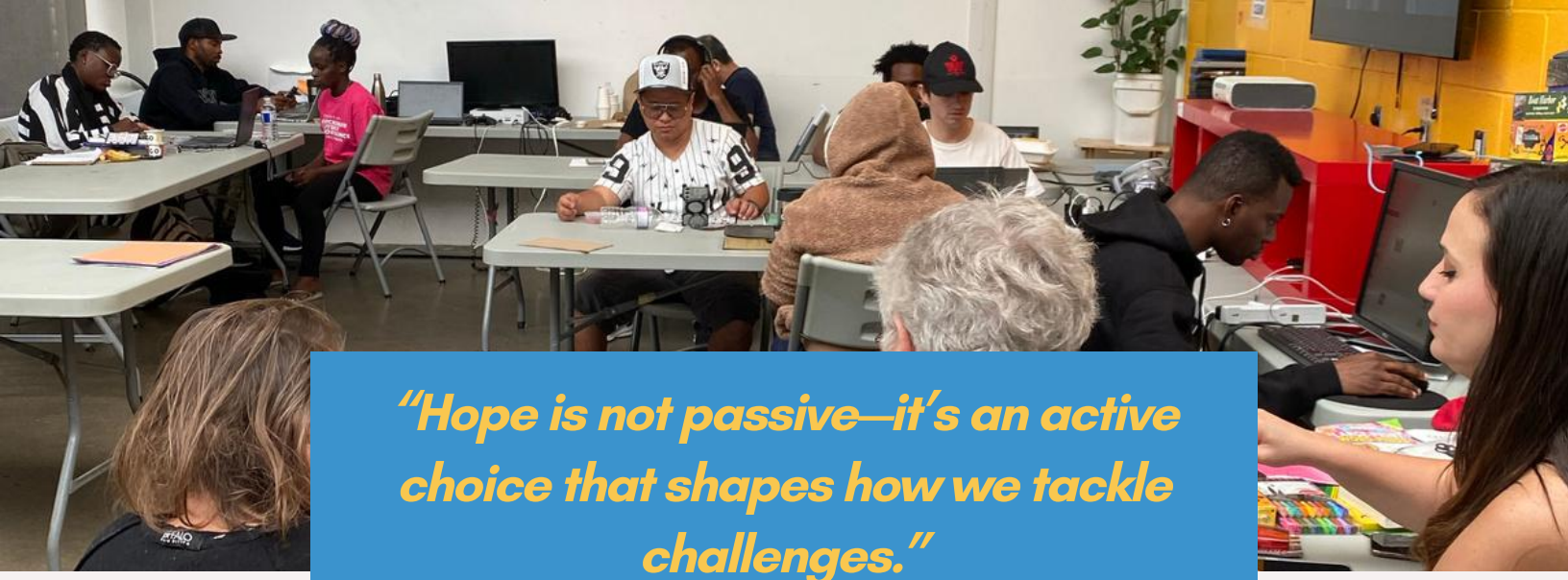
TURNING HOPE INTO ACTION: THE POWER OF CASEWORK AT ST.FELIX CENTRE

Hope is the currency of the Casework and Social Support team. Every day, we work with our guests to tap into hope and plan for a future beyond our program, giving us optimism for the future of St. Felix Centre. **Challenges are inevitable, but hope transforms uncertainty into a strategy.**

Our guests come from diverse backgrounds, facing unique challenges. Hope empowers them—and us—to take risks, learn, and grow. By focusing on possibilities instead of barriers, we open doors to new opportunities. Collaboration fosters trust and shared optimism, helping us see challenges as opportunities. This past year, our focus on housing readiness yielded unprecedented results, with **10 guests transitioning to permanent housing**—a historic achievement for the organization.



Our "incremental progress plan" celebrates small victories and uses **hope to stay solution-focused, adapt, and persevere.** Innovation is key to breaking systemic barriers. Over the past year, we partnered with organizations like Parkdale Pharmacy



> ***"Hope is not passive—it's an active choice that shapes how we tackle challenges."***
>
> - Emmanuel Kozyrakis,
> Casework & Social Support Manager

and Imagine Health Promotion to address health needs, launched harm reduction groups, and created new pathways to healthcare and education through collaborations with local colleges and refugee support services. These efforts have transformed our department from triage casework to intensive case management, despite the unique challenges of a 24-hour respite environment.

Social programming complements casework by fostering community and self-discovery. We've launched knitting and arts groups, with plans for a grief group to address shared trauma. Celebrating events like the Day for Truth and Reconciliation helps our guests reconnect with their identities. These programs create spaces for growth and reflection, vital for progress.

Hope is not passive—it's an active choice that shapes how we tackle challenges. As we look to the future, **we remain committed to inspiring collaboration, innovation, and resilience, turning hope into action to build a brighter future at St. Felix Centre.**

FROM HOUSING TO HOME: A JOURNEY OF HOPE

Our Housing program embodies hope by addressing the unique challenges faced by our residents and tenants**. Through innovative solutions, decisive action, and strong community support, we have made a lasting impact.**

At our Transitional House, **we empower women through a comprehensive and collaborative approach,** helping them navigate complex administrative processes and access essential services. As an example, after resolving a resident's expired work permit, we connected a her with a cooking program which equipped her with valuable professional skills. Another example is when resident secured a volunteer role at a food bank which fostered a sense of purpose and community engagement.



Our focus on housing stability and employment has led to successful transitions to permanent housing at 22 Maynard Ave, in partnership with the Neighbourhood Land Trust. Strategic planning, partnerships with housing agencies, and caseworker support have prepared residents for independent living. We've also helped tenants access Toronto's Rent-Geared-to-Income program and Habitat Services, easing financial burdens. Support for seniors, tenancy challenges, and mental health remains a priority, with external partnerships ensuring comprehensive care.

Community initiatives like the 22 Maynard Garden and the "Orphans Christmas Dinner" foster inclusivity and belonging. **Through trust and compassion, our Housing team empowers residents to rebuild their lives, proving that hope thrives through collective effort.**



TOGETHER IN HOPE: THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is a powerful source of hope at St. Felix Centre. While we've faced challenges, we are constantly reminded that support for St. Felix Centre runs deep. Our supporters continue to show up, proving that hope is alive in our community.

Despite a smaller volunteer base this year due to ongoing construction projects, we were still able to accommodate d**edicated groups who stepped up in meaningful ways.** Some examples are hosting a summer barbecue for our respite guests, revitalizing the patio space with fresh flowers, painting bedrooms at our Transitional House, and a piloting a tutoring program for our residents.



Through strong partnerships, both new and longstanding, we've created incredible experiences for our guests. From a neighbourhood cleanup hosted by the Resident's Association to the continued collaborative success of our neighbourhood relationships via the Liberty Village Community Liaison Committee. With the support of Craft Brasserie, we hosted a three-course dinner for 50 of our guests and residents, reminding us that hope and change comes from community.



Additionally, individual community members and supporters continue to show up in powerful ways. Whether through words of encouragement, offering their time to share a conversation or connecting us to their networks. These small gestures create **ripples of hope**, reinforcing that **anything is possible when a community comes together.**

Through these connections, folks not only support our programs but also gain a deeper understanding of the realities of homelessness in Toronto. By engaging with us and our guests, they have the opportunity to **challenge biases, broaden their perspectives, and recognize the humanity in those who are often overlooked.** This exchange of understanding fosters a stronger, more compassionate community, one where hope continues to thrive.

"With hope, we continue to build bridges of understanding, create opportunities for engagement, and inspire lasting change."

- Vanessa Li
Communications Manager

While challenges remain, the outpouring of support from our community reassures us that we are not alone in this work. **Hope is not just something we give, it's something we share.**

HELP US BUILD HOPE HOUSE

Our Rapid Housing Initiative Capital Campaign continues in support of Hope House, which will **open its doors this spring**. This vital project is on track to provide **safe, permanent housing for women** experiencing homelessness, offering a fresh start and a place where they can rebuild their lives with the necessary support.



As we approach the opening of Hope House, **there are still crucial tasks to complete** before we can welcome women into their new homes. From **finalizing construction** to **ensuring essential services** are in place, your support is more important than ever. **Every contribution helps** us complete the final steps of this transformative project and provides a safe space where women can access the resources, care, and hope they need to thrive.

We invite you to join us in this important campaign. **With your help, we can ensure that Hope House becomes the lasting home and source of hope for those who need it most.**



To learn more and contribute, visit buildhopehouse.com. **Together, we can build affordable and supportive housing to give women and their children hope for their future.**

For more information, connect with our Director of Philanthropy & Communications, Enrique Cochegrus at enrique@stfelixcentre.org

MAJOR DONORS 2023-2024

Felician Sisters of North America
Felician Sisters of Canada
Felician Services, Inc.
Adam Metrakos
Adriana Speranzo
Aelena Foster-Chandler
Amma Canada
Andre Morgan
Andrew Nagy
Andrew Zarebski
Anne Rose
Archdiocese of Toronto
Beanfield
Bernadette Lonergan
Blue Sea Foundation
Carla Estevao-Machado
Caroline Park
Cassiopeia To
Cathy & Nunzio Romano
Cecilia Lau
Charities Aid Foundation Canada
Charityaccounts! Inc.
Christine Fong
City of Toronto
Codan Canada
David & Patricia Rudan
Dianne & Norman Levine
DoctorCare
Ebuka Uduezue
Elaine Vacheresse
Elevation Church Canada
Emily Dawson
Enrique Cochegrus
Estate of Sheila Harrison
Evan Prendergast
Four Oaks Foundation
Fundthrough
Georgina Carson
IAMGOLD Corporation
Irene Gilligan
Janet Gunn
Janey Ng
Janine Sedgwick
Jen Garvan
Jennifer Potts
Jennifer Quinn
Jeremy Fleming
John & Mira Kaczor
John Rebello
Jozef Syper
Julie Arie
Kaitlin Buckley
Kathryn Rea
Keith Villena
Kevin Goldthorp
Krista Third
Kristen Traicus
Kristina Nicolaides
Lawrence Snook
La Foundation Emmanuelle Gattuso
Lauren Bates
Loretto Abbey Catholic Secondary School
Louise Morwick
Ronnies Treats
Mary & Graham Hallward
Mary Lou Elliot
Mary McCallum
Matt Pletrangelo
Matthew Owens
Melody Artounian
Michele Childs
Michelle Marsellus
Msgr. Paul Zimmer
Nieuport Aviation
Palais Royal Corporation
Pamela Munoz
Patricia De Souza
Peter Fitzpatrick
QuadReal Property Group Employees
Quinton Jacobs
Raymond James Canada Foundation
Ray Seccaspina
Raymond James Ltd.
Rhonda Hartling
Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation
Ronnie Treats
Rotary Club of Parkdale-Highpark-Humber
Sam Hayter
Sara Makvandi
Sister M. Francesca Buczkowski
Shasta Lutz
Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel
St. Marys Cement
Starbucks District 268
Starbucks Foundation Charitable Fund
The Newlands Family Foundation
The Sprott Foundation
The Westin Harbour Castle
Theodore Kebede
Tony Cohen
Toronto Foundation
VCA Canada
Victoria Toncic
Westway Animal Clinic
Workday
William Broughton
William Gorman
Whitehorse Liquidity Partners Inc.
Ya-Fan Chen
Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI)

ST. FELIX SOCIAL MINISTRIES OUTREACH

2023-2024 FINANCES

Statement of Operations
For the Year Ended
June 30, 2024

	2024	*2023*
Revenue		
Grants & services contracts		
City of Toronto	$5,717,349	$6,982,145
Province of Ontario	45,007	27,890
Felician Services Inc.	117,602	130,726
Foundations	95,443	92,806
Other		
Donations & Fundraising		
Felician Sisters	251,418	243,070
Individuals	100,101	104,373
Corporate	39,935	64,468
Foundations & other registered charities	36,554	9,334
Fundraising event	57,518	64,087
Rental Income	306,480	-
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	65,664	78,265
Interest income	385,610	157,932
	7,218,681	7,955,096
Expenditures		
Salaries & related benefits	3,527,030	4,518,343
Program	1,983,207	2,356,154
Occupancy	1,048,190	325,371
Professional & consulting fees	362,898	211,586
Amortization	97,904	124,522
General & office	97,479	68,375
Insurance	44,820	30,584
Fundraising	20,418	11,884
Loss on disposal of capital assets	10,648	-
	7,192,594	7,646,819
Excess of revenue over expenditures	$26,087	$308,277

ST. FELIX CENTRE BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023-2024

Bernadette Lonergan, *Chair*
Elizabeth Schreurs, *Vice Chair*
Paul Hyung, *Treasurer*
Michelle Marsellus, *Secretary*
Todd Beadle, Senior Ministry Advisor, *Board Member*
Sister Francesca Buczkowski, *Board Member*
Evan Prendergast, *Board Member*
Sister MaryAnne Olekszyk, *Board Member*
Sister Renee Kurczaba, *Board Member*
Jennifer Potts, *Board Member*

OUR COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR

Our annual Coldest Night of the Year 5 km fundraiser walk took place on Saturday, February 22nd to much success! With 296 walkers, 32 teams and 72 volunteers, we raised over $84,000 reaching 94% of our goal of $90,000.

This year, we are grateful for the generous support of our sponsors including Meridian Credit Union, Felician Services Inc, Starbucks, SK COOKKS, Deciem, Kind Laundry, Laneige and SmartSweets.

For more information, please visit our website or email us at connect@stfelixcentre.org.

STAY IN TOUCH

St. Felix Centre
25 Augusta Ave.
Toronto, ON M5T 2K7
416-203-1624
www.stfelixcentre.org