



# THE DWELLING

where God and God's people meet



# 2023 IMPACT REPORT



502 N. Broad Street | WSNC | 27101



[www.thedwellingsws.org](http://www.thedwellingsws.org)

# WHAT'S IS THE DWELLING?



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The Dwelling is a rapidly growing partnership between the North Carolina Synod and the Southern Province of the Moravian Church that does community church primarily with our neighbors who are currently or have lived the experience of homelessness, addiction/recovery, severe and persistent mental illness, incarceration reentry, and/or other marginalized experiences. Current numbers include an average of over 150 in worship each Sunday, and an additional 75 guests that join us for our community meal. In addition to weekly gathered worship, our current programs include the operation and stewardship of a mobile shower trailer which provides 60+ showers plus new underwear, t-shirts, socks, and toiletries each week, a weekly community meal, service learning experiences focused on economic equity, and community organizing addressing the shortage of affordable housing in our community, restorative writing workshops, transportation to local pantries, and an upcoming pay-as-you-can food truck that addresses the systemic challenges around hunger in our community and provides an avenue for advocacy and education related to the intersection of hunger, poverty, and homelessness.

After years of relationship building and conversation with unhoused neighbors, we grew out of a desire to build a community of faith where everyone, despite their housing status, mental health, past trauma, substance use, could be a leader.

Community is an organic part of who we are, and grows out of our five core theological statements: housing doesn't equal worthiness; trauma doesn't equal shame; hunger doesn't equal emptiness; sobriety doesn't equal salvation; and wealth doesn't equal belovedness. Because we affirm and celebrate the inherent dignity of all people, folks find our community a place where they can come, just as they are, without worry or fear of judgment.



# YEAR IN REVIEW



Dear Dwelling Community,

As we celebrate a remarkable year, I am filled with gratitude and excitement for the transformative development that our wild and holy community has experienced. The life we've shared together has been nothing short of extraordinary, and I am thrilled to share some highlights with you.

This year has marked a year of shocking growth. Week after week, month after month, more and more Beloveds have called The Dwelling home. It is a testament to the impact this church makes and the sense of belonging that can be found in community. Your commitment to our shared mission has truly created a vibrant and welcoming space for all.

I am thrilled to celebrate the successful completion of a significant building project, made possible by Augsburg Lutheran Church and so many, that has allowed us to deepen our impact and care for this community. This accomplishment represents not just physical growth but also a commitment to better serve our growing community. The new space is a reflection of our dedication to creating an environment that nurtures collaboration, creativity, and holy trouble.

Living into this new space has brought about a renewed sense of purpose and energy. It symbolizes a chapter of growth, innovation, and the collective efforts of everyone involved. We have created more than a building; we have built a home for our shared dreams, and I am profoundly grateful for each person who contributed to making this dream a reality.

As we celebrate our impact in 2023, I am excited to see what the Spirit will move us toward in 2024. God has been so faithful. Why stop now? I pray that we continue to find ourselves in a posture of discernment and response to what Jesus is calling us to next. But one thing is certain, we will do it together.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Your dedication, passion, and love for God's people has been the faithful response to God's action in this community.

With heartfelt gratitude,

*Rev. Emily H. Norris*



# COMMUNITY

average worship attendance

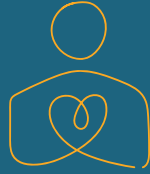


weekly Bible study and children's Sunday school



33 baptisms & affirmations

145+



1,600+ more than hours of pastoral care



9 funerals



2,500+ showers

12,418

meals served

MISSIONS



more than 10,700 shower kits, hygiene & clothing items shared

weekly PANTRY PARTY for 20+ households



10 participants in Witnessing Homelessness community education course

over 240



pantry visits

14 congregation visits



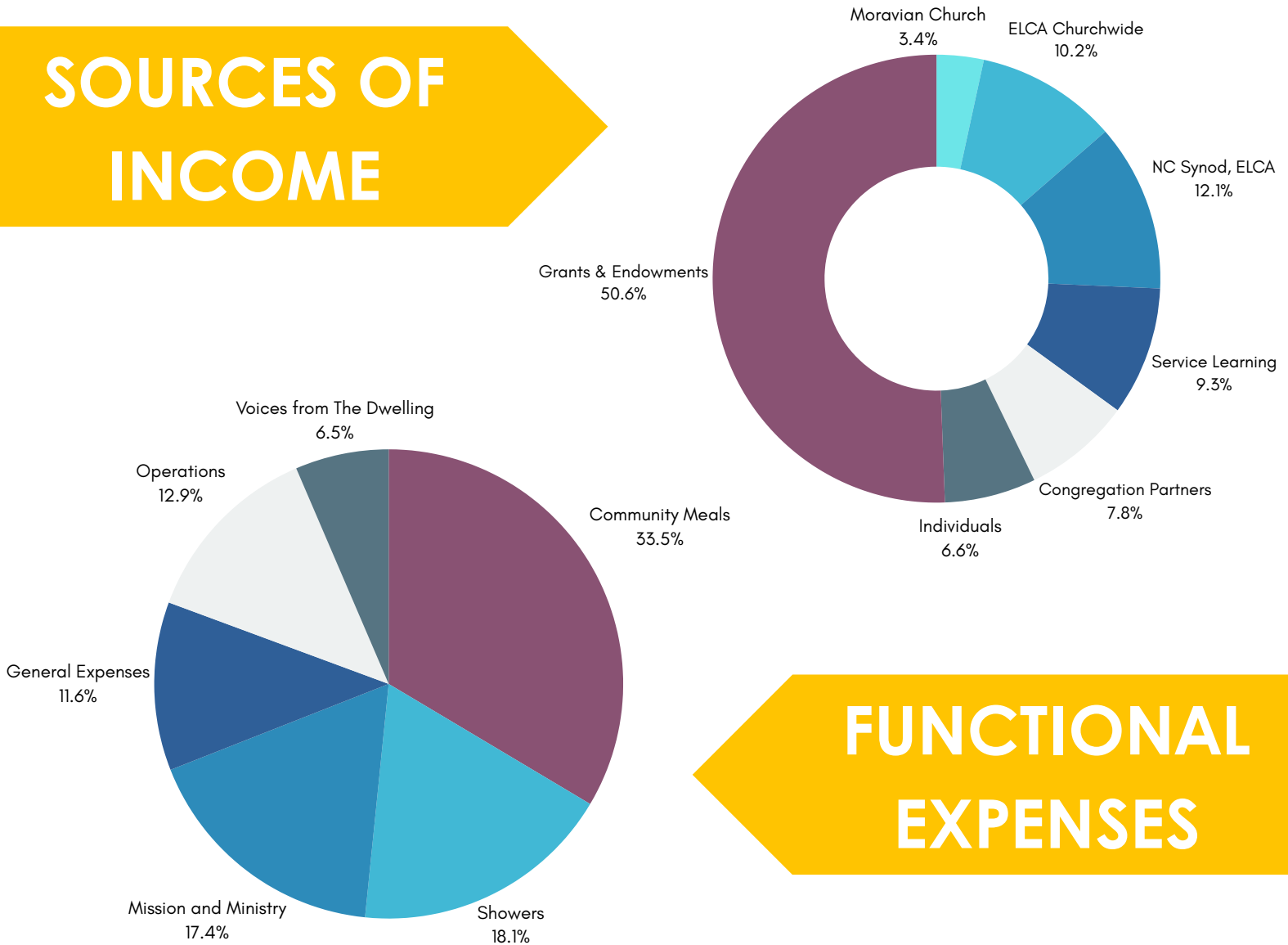
5 weeks of Spark'Dwell with 250+ participants & 46 projects



"The Dwelling is like coming home. The staff is amazing and services are great!"

# Financials

## SOURCES OF INCOME



## FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

*“When I first started coming to The Dwelling I was homeless and addicted to drugs. It changed my life by coming here everyday.”*



# SPARK'DWELL

## ## Your Backyard ##

Because justice issues related to homelessness, hunger, poverty, racism, education disparity, and more are complex situations that require complex conversations and answers, SPARK and The Dwelling team up (Spark'Dwell) to offer opportunities for young people and adults to spend a week during the summer or fall/spring break participating in Spirit and Service Learning Experiences.

In 2023 we centered our hearts around the theme of **YOUR BACKYARD**, acknowledging that God's backyard doesn't have a fence line. This year we welcomed groups all the way from Washington State, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Kansas, New England, South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, and more!



# Voices FROM THE DWELLING

THE ACT OF TELLING ONE'S STORY IS A FORM OF JUSTICE.



In 2023, The Dwelling partnered with Authoring Action to develop an engagement that amplified the voices of Winston-Salem's homeless and housing insecure population. With a Summer and Fall program, each engagement consisted of the monologues, poems, stories, and songs that were created in a series of Authoring Action Creative Writing workshops. Professional local artists collaborated with the authors to develop a multi media engagement that was presented at The Dwelling and welcomed hundreds of local and non-local guests to hear stories of power and resiliency filled with joy, grace, and love.

**We look forward to two more engagements in 2024.  
May 2-4, 2024 & October 24-26, 2024**

Be sure to stay tuned for a feature length Voices From The Dwelling documentary coming in 2024!



A photograph of Chris Jackson, a man with a beard and a baseball cap, smiling and holding two young children. The child on the left is a girl with curly hair wearing a red shirt, and the child on the right is a girl with braided hair wearing a pink and white striped hoodie. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with large windows.

# Member Spotlight

## Chris Jackson

Chris Jackson, community member and leader at The Dwelling, is a testament to the transformative power of community. Chris left home at 13 and for years he navigated the harsh realities of homelessness until he was 20.

Chris' path intersected with The Dwelling when he was invited to come to the foot clinic. Entering The Dwelling, Chris found not just a church but a sanctuary of acceptance. In describing his first Sunday at the Dwelling, Chris said, "I had not had that kind of welcoming in my life." When asked what made the welcome feel special, Chris described Pastor Emily's genuine smile and the warmth and acceptance of all the staff that helped foster a sense of belonging he had long yearned for.

This sense of community at The Dwelling was unlike anything Chris had experienced before. Chris said the most important thing was learning to trust people again. As a result he formed meaningful connections with the staff and community members of The Dwelling.

Chris remarked, "Because of the support of The Dwelling, I've grown professionally, personally and on a spiritual level. I was able to get a professional footing." This year in community Chris re-affirmed his baptism in celebration of one year sober, obtained his CDL and is now working as a school bus driver.

Yet, it was the intangible growth that resonated most deeply with Chris. Through de-escalation training and serving on The Dwelling's security team, he learned empathy and conflict resolution, skills that empowered him both personally and within his community.

Reflecting on his journey, Chris spoke of the profound transformation he had undergone. "I accomplished being me," he remarked, a testament to the resilience that had carried him through his darkest days. Chris said, "When I was homeless I was not able to fully be myself or who I wanted to be. At The Dwelling I found people to lean on and I have a chosen family now."

The Dwelling became more than a church to Chris; it became a healing community. His story is a testament to the power of community, the resilience of the human spirit and the tangibility of resurrection.

