



THE DWELLING

where God and God's people meet



2024 IMPACT REPORT



502 N. Broad Street | WSNC | 27101



www.thedwellingws.org

WHAT IS THE DWELLING?

After years of building relationships with unhoused neighbors, we formed a faith community where everyone, regardless of housing status, mental health, past trauma, or substance use, could lead. Our community is rooted in five core theological values: 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. By affirming and celebrating the inherent dignity of all people, we create a space where everyone is welcomed as they are.

SHOWERS

The Dwelling's shower ministry operates a mobile shower trailer, providing over 60 showers each week to neighbors in need. Along with access to hot water, guests receive essentials like new underwear, T-shirts, socks, and toiletries, offering dignity and care to those experiencing homelessness.

COMMUNITY

At The Dwelling, community is at the heart of everything we do—it's messy, it's authentic, and it's real. We embrace the complexities of life, creating a space where people can show up just as they are, without judgment or fear. Together, we lean into healing, sharing in each other's joys and struggles as we grow into community.

FEASTING

Our feasting ministry is rooted in the belief that food is medicine—not only healing the body but also nourishing the soul. In the past year, we've shared over 21,000 meals together. When we gather around the table, we're not just eating; we're healing, building a community where no one goes hungry in body or spirit.

RESTORATIVE WRITING

Voices from The Dwelling is an 8-week restorative writing program, offered twice a year in collaboration with Authoring Action. This project gives neighbors a platform to share their stories and experiences in their own words, fostering healing, self-expression, and empowerment. Each session culminates in a staged engagement, where participants' voices are celebrated and shared, building connection, challenging stigma, and showcasing the resilience of our community.

SHELTER

The Dwelling's shelter ministry provides life-saving support through our emergency winter shelters, ensuring hundreds of people stay warm and safe during the coldest months. This includes a women's shelter in partnership with St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, a moms and kids shelter with Calvary Moravian, and a men's warming shelter in our building.

ED & ADVOCACY

As a member of our local IAF, we organize to address systemic challenges through collective action. We empower neighbors to shape their communities and foster justice. Spark'Dwell equips participants for advocacy through relationship-centered service that inspires action on issues like homelessness and housing insecurity, reflecting The Dwelling's commitment to lasting, systemic change.



MY BELOVED FRIENDS,

Dear Dwelling Community Near and Far...

Looking at 2024, my heart overflows with gratitude for all that God has done in and through this wild and holy community. It is truly humbling to stand at the edge of our fifth year, marveling at how swiftly the journey has unfolded. Every time I think we might settle into a familiar rhythm, the Lord invites us to take another step into the next most faithful thing—and we're off again!

This year, that invitation led us into the vital work of emergency winter shelter. It has been both a bold new adventure and a return to our roots—a reminder that the holy often meets us in the muck and the mess. Together, we have witnessed the profound power of showing up for one another in the most vulnerable of places. In December alone, just one month into our three-month winter shelter commitment, we provided warmth and safety for 285 unique individuals.

The whispers from our community that first called for a church that looked like them—one where they were leaders and not simply guests—happened in the warmth of an emergency winter shelter. To now be spearheading the city-wide emergency shelter efforts for Winston-Salem feels like a homecoming, a return to the place that sparked the divine movement of The Dwelling. This work is more than shelter; it is a living expression of what it means to be a community shaped by love, dignity, and shared leadership.

As we reflect on this year, I am also filled with anticipation for the opportunities ahead. In 2025, we will lean further into our call to teach and lead on a broader scale, sharing the lessons this little church on the edges has learned. Turns out, we have something to teach about what it means to build a community of belovedness and belonging!

To each of you who have prayed, served, given, and simply shown up: thank you. Your faithfulness has been a reflection of God's grace at work in this place. Together, we are building something beautiful—a community where lives are transformed and God's love is made known.

With tender gratitude for what God has done and is doing,

Rev. Emily Harpiss



BY THE NUMBERS

 **2,653** showers

& 10,567 HYGIENE KITS & CLOTHING ITEMS GIVEN 



276 UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS SHELTERED IN 2024

25 partner congregations 



AVERAGE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE
179

 **25,326** MEALS SERVED

31  BAPTISMS & AFFIRMATIONS

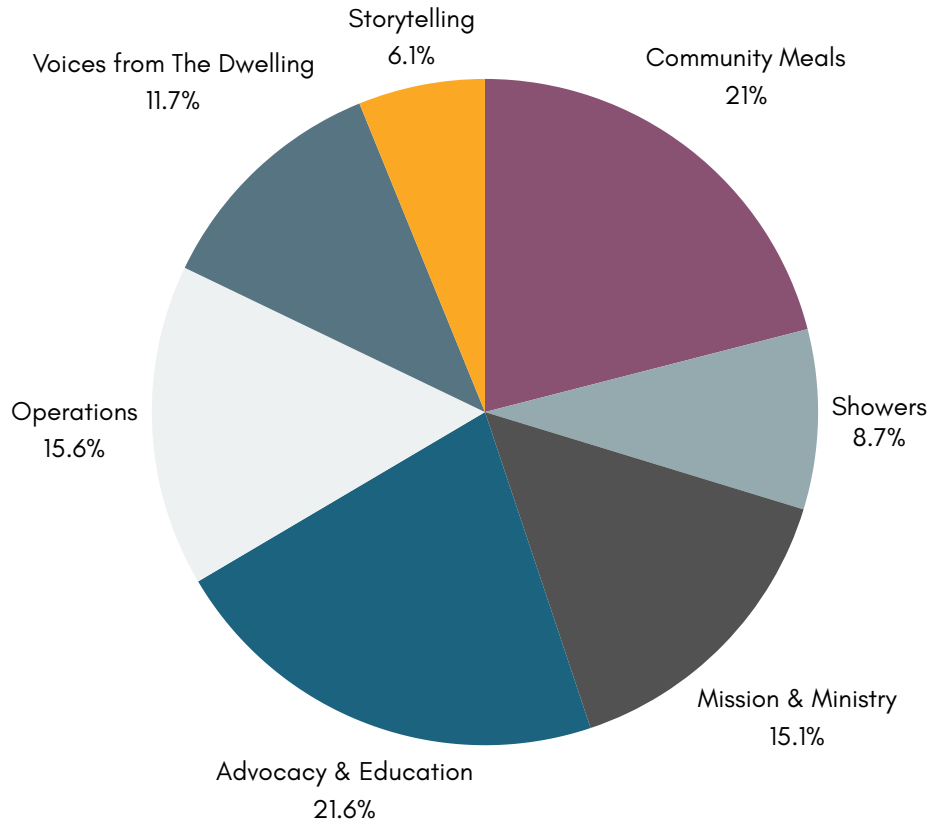
over **240** pantry visits

1900+ HOURS OF PASTORAL CARE & COMMUNITY 

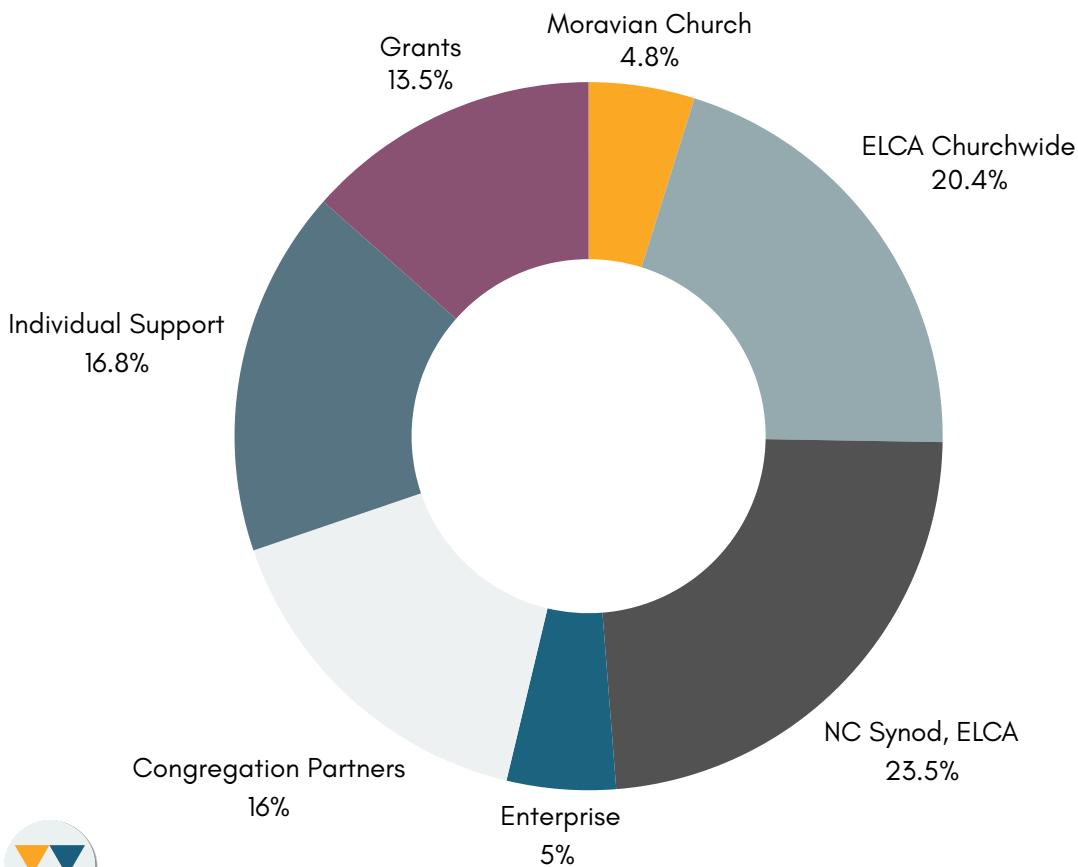


FINANCIALS

FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES



INCOME SOURCES





CHECK OUT
OUR 2024
THEME VIDEO!



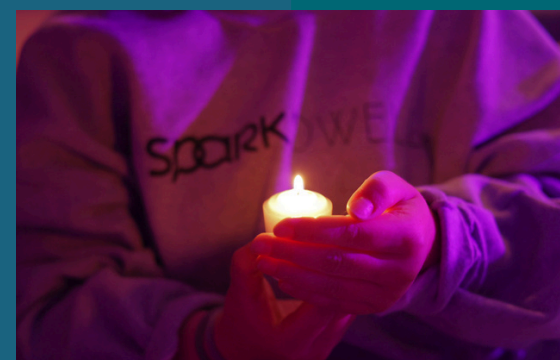
SPARK'DWELL

UNPACKED

This summer at SPARK'DWELL, we dove deep into our theme, "Unpacked." We worked to unpack the ways of the world to make space for the expansive, curious, and wild love of God.

A collaboration between SPARK and The Dwelling, SPARK'DWELL offers Spirit and Service Learning Experiences for young people and adults to explore justice issues related to homelessness, hunger, poverty, racism, and more. These complex issues demand complex conversations and actions. Our program provides the space to engage deeply and meaningfully.

During Summer 2024, we partnered with 24 local organizations to complete 25 impactful projects with 181 of participants from 17 different churches. Each week featured poverty simulations led by our Dwelling Counselors, individuals with lived experience of homelessness who shared their personal stories and perspectives. Their leadership offered participants an authentic and transformative understanding of systemic challenges. SPARK'DWELL combines service and spirituality, equipping participants to reflect on their faith while engaging with real-world justice issues.



SCAN TO WATCH THE 2024 RECAP VIDEO WITH ORIGINAL SONG WRITTEN BY PARTICIPANTS!



WWW.SPARKDWELL.ORG



2024 ELCA Youth Gathering

CREATED

TO
the table

BE

MYLE
Young
Adult
Gathering



THIS SUMMER,
THE DWELLING 

& 17,000 of our closest friends met for an unforgettable week in NOLA

Pastor Emily hit the mainstage at the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans, and wow, did she shine! Invited to speak on the second night, with the theme Created to Be Authentic, she brought the heart and soul of The Dwelling to life for thousands of young people. Emily shared powerful stories about our incredible community, including the unforgettable journey of The Mayor—how being known, seen, and loved by God transforms everything. She reminded everyone that God celebrates the full, messy, beautiful selves we bring to the table. It was an electric moment, filled with joy, love, and plenty of Dwelling pride, as Pastor Emily lifted up our community's stories into the light for all to celebrate. What an honor, what a message, and what a night!

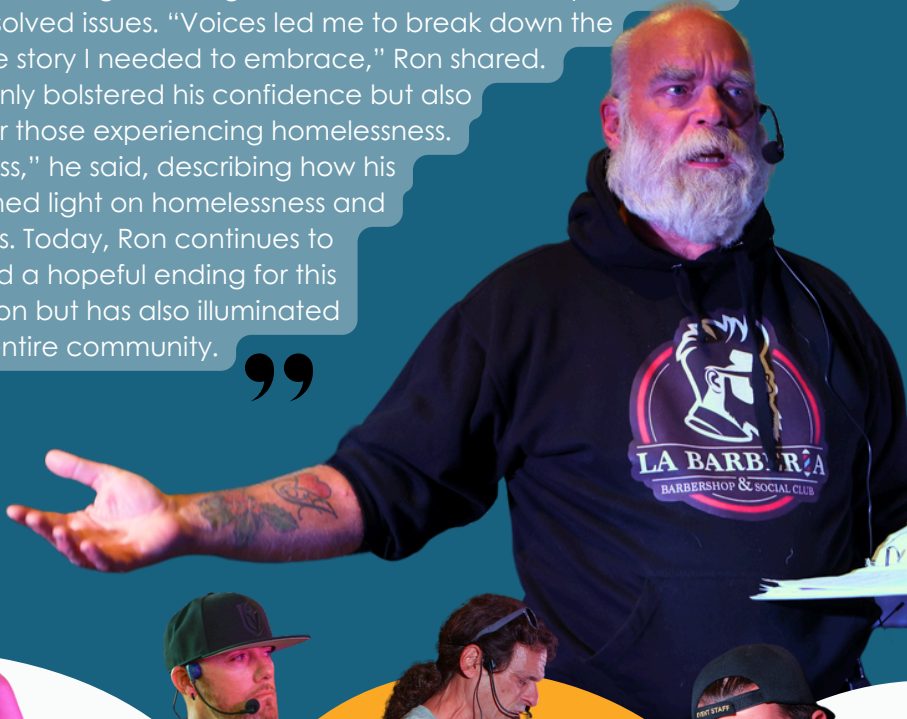


Voices FROM THE DWELLING

In 2024, The Dwelling strengthened its partnership with Authoring Action to uplift the voices of Winston-Salem's homeless and housing-insecure individuals. Through vibrant Summer and Fall sessions, participants explored creative writing, producing monologues, poems, stories, and songs that reflected their unique journeys. These works were skillfully transformed into a multimedia showcase in collaboration with professional local artists. Hosted at The Dwelling, the presentations drew an audience of hundreds, both local and beyond, offering an unforgettable celebration of resilience, hope, and the transformative power of storytelling.



“ Ron entered the Voices from The Dwelling project not knowing what to expect, but the journey turned into a profound experience of self-discovery and healing. Listening to the stories of others inspired Ron to reflect deeply on his own life and confront unresolved issues. “Voices led me to break down the compartments of my life and see it as one whole story I needed to embrace,” Ron shared. The process of writing and sharing his story not only bolstered his confidence but also transformed him into a passionate advocate for those experiencing homelessness. “Sometimes I feel like a diplomat for the homeless,” he said, describing how his involvement in Voices has empowered him to shed light on homelessness and share the reality of these experiences with others. Today, Ron continues to write, chronicling his journey and working toward a hopeful ending for this chapter of his life. Voices has not only helped Ron but has also illuminated the transformative power of storytelling for the entire community. ”



SAVE THE DATE **23 & 24** 2025 FOR OUR NEXT ENGAGEMENT

A SEASON OF CARE

The Dwelling Steps Up for Winter Shelter Leadership

This year, The Dwelling has embraced a pivotal role in leading the Winter Shelter for the 2024-2025 season, continuing the transformative work initiated by City with Dwellings (CwD). For over a decade, CwD has been a cornerstone of winter shelter efforts in Winston-Salem, supporting thousands of individuals and reshaping local housing assistance. With their shift to focus on long-term housing solutions, The Dwelling has proudly stepped in to carry forward this vital ministry.

Highlights of the first part of the 2024-2025 Winter Shelter Season

Since December 1st, 2024, The Dwelling has been offering a safe haven for both men and women in need. Check-ins occur nightly at The Dwelling, from there:

- Women are transported to St. Timothy's Episcopal Church for dinner and a restful night. Mornings begin with a return to The Dwelling, allowing them to start their day in safety.
- The Dwelling's sanctuary serves as a warming space for men, open nightly from 8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. While this space does not have sleeping mats, it provides warmth, soup, a place to rest, and hot drinks throughout the night.

Beginning January 1st, 2025, an overnight shelter for up to 20 mothers and children will open at Calvary Moravian Church, offering a secure and comfortable environment.

Each location is supported by trained monitors skilled in guest management, harm reduction, de-escalation, and trauma-informed care, ensuring a safe and welcoming atmosphere.

Community support has made this possible, and together, we are ensuring that our neighbors in need have a warm and safe place to turn this winter.

VOLUNTEER | VOLUNTEER | VOLUNTEER | VOLUNTEER

WARMING



WOMEN'S



FAMILY





The Dwelling FOOD TRUCK

Joseph Hedrick,
Minister of Meals (MOM)



Food is a human right. Food is medicine. Food is life.

In 2025, the Dwelling's highly anticipated pay-what-you-can food trailer will finally launch! This concept embodies the idea of come as you are and bridges a gap towards the iconized table where all are welcome. Being located downtown Winston Salem, the Dwelling aims to accomplish convenience, consistency and connection to everyone, a win-win in the hub of white and blue collar community. The Dwelling's Feasting Ministry focuses its standard of availability, sustainability, and equality by redefining the offering plate. Can you imagine balancing the scale with whole fruits and vegetables? Our mission claims that healthy food isn't Just for the wealthy.

Over the past 2 years, the Dwellings' partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank (SHFB) continues to blossom. With access to SHFB's state of the art kitchen and our staff's expertise, we can utilize food donations and provide meals of high nutritional value that, simply put, are down right delicious. Easily forgotten, food is medicine and our nation is under an ever-growing epidemic of diet-related diseases. While the fortunate have access to local food, a place to cook or a garden plot, others don't even have a place to call home. What would you buy with your EBT if you didn't have a stovetop or a refrigerator?

If quality of life is often expressed by our sense of purpose or meaning, imagine a life that won't even feed you. Launching this food trailer is a step towards physiological nourishment, meanwhile its sustainability opens the door for future job opportunities. The Dwelling food trailer will partner with Providence Culinary Program. Graduates from this program come from all walks of life, a continuation of our belief that all are welcome to the table. Our food trailer, a meer 150 sf, looks at the towering goliath of systemic poverty and slings a potato at it.

If we can deliver convenience (human right), consistency (medicine) and connection (life), we begin to open the door to loving and belonging. You belong. You matter. Will you feast with us?



Want to book
The Dwelling
for your next event?
Scan here for inquiries



for more assistance please contact foodtruck@thedwellingws.org

www.thedwellingws.org



moments that MADE THE YEAR





Meet Ajai

When Ajai first arrived at The Dwelling, he wasn't sure what to expect. Like so many in our community, he was drawn by word of mouth and the promise of a warm meal. "A guy told me about The Dwelling, and the first time I came, I got hooked," Ajai recalls. But what started as a place to find nourishment quickly became something far deeper—a place to find belonging.

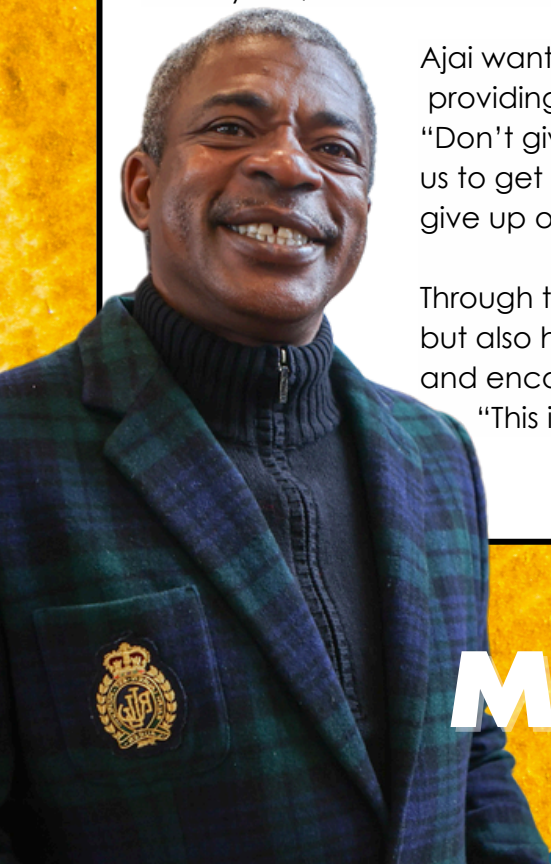
Ajai speaks with joy about the unique atmosphere at The Dwelling. "There's so much love here," he says. "You can feel it the moment you walk in. The church, the people—it all just pulls you in and holds on to you." That sense of connection has kept Ajai coming back week after week for more than a year. "It's not just a church—it's family," he shares. "Here, people see your worth."

Ajai's journey with The Dwelling has not only impacted his faith but also transformed him into a leader in the community. Whether he's helping ensure everyone has a meal as part of the breakfast and lunch crew or assisting with cleanup after services, Ajai serves with joy and intention. "I love seeing the smiles on people's faces," he says. "That's what brings me joy—being able to help and showing others the love of God." His infectious smile and warm spirit are as nourishing as the meals he helps prepare.

"The Dwelling has brought me closer in my walk with God," Ajai shares. "I take the lessons from the sermons and apply them to my life all week. I'm walking around with the spirit of God in me, trying to show people He is real, and they can find Him here." For Ajai, The Dwelling is more than a place of worship—it's a model of unconditional love and grace. "I'm learning to love people as they are, not as who I'd want them to be," he reflects. "It's not easy, but it's worth it."

Ajai wants supporters of The Dwelling to know their impact goes far beyond providing meals and services. "You're doing a wonderful job," he says. "Don't give up on us. We have goals and ambitions, too—it's just harder for us to get there right now. But as long as we don't give up and you don't give up on us, we'll make it."

Through the support of The Dwelling, Ajai is not only finding hope for himself but also helping to build a beloved community where all are valued, loved, and encouraged to grow. "This is where I want to be," he says, "This is home."



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

www.thedwellingws.org