



**WATER STREET
MISSION**

**DOORWAYS
TO RESTORATION**
2024 ANNUAL REPORT

A hand with fingers spread, set against a background of a city map and a sun. The hand is rendered in a dark orange color with a fine, grid-like texture. The background is a lighter orange with a faint city map and a sun with rays. Two large white quotation marks are positioned at the top left of the page.

“

I want to be a beacon of light like the staff have been for me. I don't have perfect days, I have some terrible days to be honest, but there's always someone there for me to talk to.”

Water Street Mission Guest

Doorways To Restoration

Dear Friends,

Looking back on this past year, we're overwhelmed with gratitude for everything we've accomplished together. Thanks to your kindness and support, 2024 has been full of hope and transformation—proof of God's love in action through this ministry and through you.

This year's theme, *Doorways to Restoration*, reflects the journeys of the people who come through our doors every day. For some, it's their first warm meal in weeks. For others, it's the start of finding stable housing, a new job, or a chance to rebuild relationships. Every doorway represents courage and restoration, made possible by God's grace and your generosity.

In this booklet, we're celebrating the incredible milestones we've reached together in 2024. From providing thousands of nights of safe shelter to connecting people with life-changing resources and spiritual support, these accomplishments show just how much we can do when we come together with love and faith.

None of this would have happened without you. Your prayers, donations, and time have been a source of strength and encouragement as we tackle the challenges of homelessness and poverty in our community. Because of your unwavering support, we're able to provide not just help but real, lasting hope.

As you read through this report, take a moment to celebrate these victories with us. You are an essential part of this ministry, and we're so grateful for you. Thank you for helping us open more doorways to restoration.

With heartfelt gratitude,



Jack Crowley

President | Water Street Mission





Opened Doors in 2024





45,383

Nights of
shelter
in 2024



83,380

Meals served
in our
dining hall



390

Teens, kids & young
adults connected
with our Next Gen
Ministry on average
each month.



2,995

Unique Neighbors
received groceries
at our
Outreach Center



31

Children
stayed at
Water Street



2,835

Life coach &
social worker
meetings
took place



536

Adult guests
stayed at
Water Street



37

Guests finished
our Faith and
Finance course



“It’s not about us and how much we did. We’re not here for the paycheck, the money, for the glory that Water Street is, but we want to be able to meet people at the door and say ‘Ok, if this way didn’t work, let’s see if another way will.’ And no matter what, we’ll walk with them through their lives and help them cope, whatever comes our way.”

Jason Roskowski

Director
Emergency Shelter



Emergency Shelter: A Safe Place to Land

At our Emergency Shelter, we provide more than just a bed and a meal—we offer a safe place where guests can find stability, process emotions, and take steps toward a better future. Our staff aim to help them navigate anxiety, anger, and frustration while equipping them with tools for personal growth. Even when progress comes in small steps—choosing to work through challenges instead of giving up—we celebrate each victory. Our shelter remains a refuge, welcoming guests back with compassion, not judgment. And whether you are facing the ups or downs of a journey, our goal is to help each person know they have a place where they are seen, supported, and loved.

Water Street's Path To Restoration For Those Experiencing Homelessness



FACING HOMELESSNESS

About 600 people experienced homelessness in Lancaster in 2024*

FIRST STEPS

Intake, orientation, and immediate support

BUILDING A FOUNDATION

Emergency Shelter

A PATH TO RENEWAL

Residential Program

RESTORED TO BE RESTORERS

Alumni services, confidence, stability, and purpose.

*According to 2024 Point In Time Count conducted by Lancaster County Homelessness Coalition



In 2024, we offered **43,677** nights of shelter to men, women, and children without a place to sleep.

Residential Program: An Opportunity For Life Change

Michael celebrated his 64th birthday at Water Street, facing homelessness for the first time in his life. “It was something I never thought I’d experience,” he admits. Growing up, life was stable. “We weren’t rich, but we always had what we needed,” he recalls. After college, Michael built a career in accounting and the hotel industry. But when he lost his job and became a full-time caregiver for his ailing mother, life took an unexpected turn. After her passing, he struggled to find work, and rent became impossible to manage.

Arriving at Water Street was humbling, but Michael quickly found hope. “The people here... I can’t say one bad thing about them,” he says. Joining our Residential Program, he faced his biggest hurdle—procrastination. This time, he didn’t wait. Through our Career and Financial Services program, Michael developed a retirement plan, learned to manage his finances, and discovered his purpose—helping his sister with high health needs.

Michael also gives back by cleaning the Emergency Shelter early each morning. “Water Street is so much more than a bed,” he says. “If you embrace what’s offered, it can change your life.”

Thanks to your support, Michael is stronger than ever and stepping into a brighter future.



“Water Street is so much more than a bed,...If you embrace what’s offered, it can change your life.”

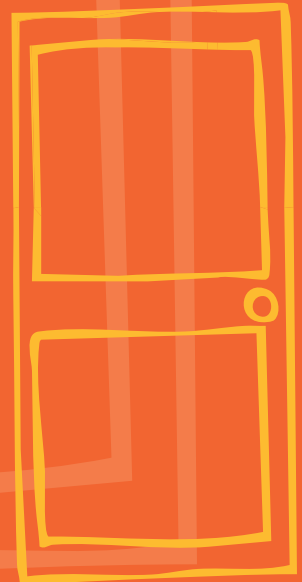
Unveiling Our Women's Residential Hall Renovation

This year, we're excited to share the transformation of our Women's Residential common areas—a project that has opened new doorways to restoration for the women and families we serve. With the skillful redesign by Cornerstone Architects, this space is now more open, inviting, and family-friendly than ever before.

The new kitchen is a centerpiece of the renovation, featuring expanded refrigeration and cooking space so moms can prepare meals for their families with ease and dignity. Two sitting areas offer warm and welcoming spaces for women to gather, while a cozy nook and reading room provide a peaceful retreat for families to relax together. Every element has been thoughtfully designed to foster a sense of safety, comfort, and community.

This building has a rich history. Originally a cotton mill, it was donated to Water Street Mission in the 1960s and has since been adapted to meet the evolving needs of those we serve. With each improvement, we've sought to create spaces that restore dignity and offer hope. This latest renovation continues that journey, ensuring the common areas are both practical and a place of healing.

We are deeply thankful for the support that made this transformation possible. Together, we are creating spaces where women can begin to rebuild their lives and find renewed strength, stepping through new doorways to brighter futures for themselves and their families.



Before



Now



Opening New Doors to Women and Children at Water Street

Over a decade ago, during Christmas, Luz and her family faced the unthinkable—homelessness. At just 15, Luz and her twin sister found themselves navigating a difficult season as their father, out of work and out of options, struggled to keep them fed and together. “We were happy to be here. It was like a safe place to find,” Luz recalls of their arrival at Water Street Mission. Despite the challenges, Water Street worked to ensure that Luz and her sister’s education remained uninterrupted. The girls endured a long bus ride to their rural school, but it was worth it. A few months later, their father secured work, allowing the family to move into a modest apartment. “It wasn’t for a long time we stayed here, but Water Street was there when we needed it most,” Luz says.

This brief but pivotal time shaped Luz’s future. She finished high school, became a Certified Nursing Assistant, and is now studying to become a Physical Therapy Assistant. Her journey brought her back to Water Street as a volunteer, where she helps distribute food and encourages others in need. “Finding that help, that support—it’s priceless,” she says.

Today, Water Street continues to be a safe haven for children like Luz, ensuring they have access to education, stability, and hope for a brighter future. Thanks to your support, Luz’s story is one of resilience and hope—a new cycle of restoration for generations to come.





***“I prayed I would never forget
the first time I walked through the
door of Water Street Mission.”***

Guest in Water Street Mission’s Residential Program

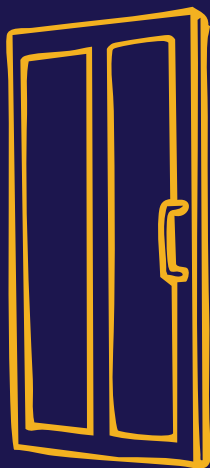
Sparking Conversations, Inspiring Change



Raising awareness about homelessness in our community has been a key focus this year. In an effort to bring this issue to the forefront, our president, Jack Crowley, hosted a live-streamed event called *Conversation on a Bench*. For 24 hours, Jack sat on a bench, inviting members of the community—from local non-profits to concerned neighbors—to join him for open and honest conversations. The event wasn't about replicating the experience of living on the streets, but rather, it was a bold way to draw attention to the rising issue of homelessness and inspire action.

We also wrapped up the second season of our *Restorers Podcast*, which dives deep into the complex issues surrounding homelessness. This season explored topics like the root causes of youth homelessness and effective ways to help individuals overcome addiction. Through these conversations, we aim to foster greater understanding and encourage meaningful change.

These initiatives remind us that awareness is a crucial first step in opening doorways to restoration for those experiencing homelessness. Together, we can spark conversations that lead to lasting impact.



"211 is like the 911 for health & human services, and above and beyond, over half of our calls are housing related right now. If you're in this critical place with your housing needs, there are other things that are going wrong as well."



Kate Zimmerman

President and CEO of United Way of Lancaster County

"I think a full comprehensive approach to poverty isn't just about raising the floor like with income, it's also about thinking about that ceiling, and where all the money is going. And if you just have a floor raise approach, without thinking about things like the market response to it, especially the housing market, those approaches can be diluted. Poverty is a deep, deep problem and should have deep, deep solutions to it."



Matthew Desmond

Princeton Sociologist and Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Evicted*

Teen Haven

Transformed by Relationship

Teen Haven mentors downtown Lancaster teens, providing a safe, fun, and loving environment. At Water Street Mission, relationships are at the heart of everything—especially Teen Haven. The photos here highlight the power of connection: the left shows a student captured by a stranger, while the right shows them photographed by a Teen Haven staff member. The joy and comfort in their expression speak to the deep relationships our students build with their mentors, creating spaces where they can thrive.



“My favorite thing about Teen Haven staff is that they are amazing people. I can go to them and ask them questions about anything...and they just really care.”

Teen Haven Student

“Teen Haven staff become family, just like that. My mentor is like my auntie, she’s funny, caring, but she also knows how to be tough on me because I’m a bit of a goofball sometimes.”

Teen Haven Student





In 2024, we launched our elementary school program, opening the door to **120** students a month on average.

COMPASS

Compass gathered **90** young adults on average in 2024.

Compass Opens the Door to a New Home

This year, Compass entered its second year and moved into its own space, stepping out from its roots in the Teen Haven program. Designed for young adults, Compass empowers them to tackle the first steps of adulthood with a Christ-centered community. Many young adults face major challenges without guidance, but Compass provides a lifeline. In their new home, they connect through Bible studies, worship nights, financial courses, and volunteer outings—growing together in faith and purpose. With this space, Compass offers more than community; it's a launchpad for young adults to thrive in life and their walk with God.





Breaking New Ground

In 2024, Wonder Academy celebrated a major milestone with the purchase of its first permanent location—the former St. Joseph’s School. This new space will serve over 50 pre-K and Kindergarten students, providing a nurturing environment where children can grow in their love of learning, people, and God. This year, students got a sneak peek at the building, helping lay the groundwork for a school designed to meet their needs and inspire their potential. The transformation of this building marks the beginning of a bright future for Wonder Academy and its young learners.





WATER STREET HEALTH SERVICES

Recuperative Care Launched

In 2024, Water Street Health Services launched its Recuperative Care program, offering a safe and supportive space for healing. With three semi-private rooms, the program provides hospital beds, accessible bathrooms, calming decor, and a kitchenette for guests' needs.

Guests benefit from daily nurse visits, care management services, and check-ins by care assistants, along with three meals a day and 24/7 access to a bed. The program also connects guests to healthcare providers and support services to help achieve their health goals. It's more than recovery—it's a step toward long-term stability and hope.



In 2024, Water
Street Health
Services had
2,417
medical and dental
appointments.



Building Relationships at the Outreach Center

Our Outreach Center is a hub of hope and sustenance for neighbors struggling with hunger. At its core, it's a food distribution center providing groceries to thousands of individuals and families each month. But it's also so much more.

This year, we launched a co-op program that has been transformative. Those who come to receive groceries can now actively participate in sorting and distributing food within a small group. Together, they delegate who receives food, fostering a sense of community and shared accountability. This innovative approach empowers our neighbors to take an active role in the process while also volunteering their time to help others.

Through the Outreach Center and initiatives like the co-op program, we're not just addressing hunger—we're building relationships and creating a stronger, more connected community.

Financials

Fiscal year 2024 was a year of growth for Water Street with a 12% increase in expenses. During the year, we purchased a large building which will house Wonder Academy, community partnerships, and more; we also launched an elementary age ministry; and took major steps in implementing our strategic plan.

4%
Teen Haven
\$573,423

2%
Outreach
\$363,336

1%
Compass
\$161,221

4%
Wonder Academy
\$685,908

9%
Health Services
\$1,659,427



9%
Management & General
\$1,409,882

17%
Advancement
\$2,703,976

51%
Mission
\$7,922,793

These investments, and many others, are the beginning fruit of a capital campaign we began this past fiscal year. And thankfully, due to the campaign and a planned strategic pull from reserves, we were able to meet our needs for annual and capital expenses last fiscal year. Thank you for contributing to the work of Water Street. As a caring community, we are working together to build lasting change for thousands of individuals and families experiencing homelessness and poverty in Lancaster County.

14%
Gift-in-Kind
\$1,870,337

6%
Other Revenue
\$753,197

2%
Fundraising Events
\$287,555



18%
Major Gifts
\$2,283,951

11%
Bequests
\$1,426,531

31%
Individual Giving <\$5k
\$4,010,261

18%
Churches, Businesses, and Foundations
\$2,319,355

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