



2021 | 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Welcoming Community



Fontbonne Ministries

Mission

We are a welcoming community where you are not alone, and everyone belongs. As an inclusive social service organization, our programs foster personal well-being and creativity and respond to food and housing insecurity, social isolation and loneliness. Wherever you are in your life, the spirit of our founders—the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto—inspires us to join you in nourishing mind, body and heart.

Vision

Building welcoming, supportive communities and pursuing social change.

Values



Respect: We value each person as a distinct expression of God's love and invite each other to discover and celebrate our unique gifts.



Advocacy: We respond to society's evolving needs and mobilize positive change through transformational leadership.



Community: We work together with neighbours and partners to build strong relationships that are mutually supportive and collaborative.



Compassion: We give our full attention to each person and show understanding, empathy and sensitivity to their needs.



Accountability: We use the resources entrusted to us with care, and make sustainable choices that will benefit future generations.

How we serve

Fontbonne Place: Providing a safe home for older single women

In Good Company: Visiting and building relationships with those who are isolated and housebound

Mustard Seed: Supporting adults living in poverty, and those who are homeless and transient, by providing essential services and welcoming safe spaces

Studio on the Hill: Exploring creativity through clay for adults of all abilities

Village Mosaic: Providing an accessible community space for seniors to connect, learn and have fun

Message from the Board Chair and Executive Director



Sister Georgette Gregory, CSJ
Board Chair and President



Hailee Morrison
Executive Director

With yet another demanding year behind us, we are pleased to share some of the challenges, highlights and new opportunities we encountered with you—our clients, partners and friends in the community, by our side.

Throughout this report, you will read the staggering statistics around food and housing insecurity; the devastating effects of social isolation on physical and mental health; and the consequences the lack of critical services, like foot care, can have on vulnerable communities. These inequities drive our mission and compel us to adapt, change and grow to meet the needs of the people we serve.

Working in collaboration with local community organizations, Fontbonne staff and volunteers rose to meet the challenges of increased demand for our meal program and clothing and hygiene services. Our programs fostering social connections transitioned their delivery model from in-person to an online or blended model, providing our seniors and participants with safe, engaging and meaningful opportunities to connect. And, through a collaboration with Metropolitan United Church, The Cathedral Church of St. James and St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica—and funding from La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso—we began offering much-needed foot care services to underserved populations in Toronto's Downtown East (DTE).

It has been a year of remarkable accomplishments, with many of you by our side, as we continue our commitment to being a welcoming community where everyone belongs. But don't just take our word for it. In the following pages you will hear directly from our guests, staff, volunteers and community partners. Their testimonials attest to the value Fontbonne Ministries' programs and services bring to diverse neighbourhoods.

We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to our success over the past year. We look forward to new opportunities as we put the devastation of the pandemic behind us.

Fontbonne Ministries welcomed our new Executive Director, Hailee Morrison, after our fiscal year-end of August 2022. Hailee quickly familiarized herself with our services and staff, visiting all Fontbonne Ministries service locations. We have already experienced her commitment to creating inclusive environments through her deep listening, thoughtful presence, curiosity and enthusiasm for the programs we deliver in alignment with our mission.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sister Georgette".

Sister Georgette Gregory, CSJ
Board Chair and President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hailee Morrison".

Hailee Morrison
Executive Director

Addressing Food Access and Housing Insecurity



“Our list is long of the many food partners, local businesses, friends and neighbours who donate to our meal program. We are deeply grateful for this ongoing support and our exceptional volunteers.”

**– Elizabeth Redegeld, Food Coordinator,
Fontbonne Ministries**



SHARING FOOD WITH THE COMMUNITY

As the Demand for Our Meal Program Grew, so Did the Generosity of Our Supporters

Mustard Seed, one of Fontbonne Ministries' three service locations, is a welcoming, safe space offering various programs to nourish the minds, bodies and hearts of those we serve. Our drop-in guests often live on low-to-no income and face barriers to accessing healthy, hearty food.

Since Fontbonne started 22 years ago, food has always been shared to show hospitality and caring. At the beginning of the pandemic in 2020, we started offering healthy takeaway lunches—serving 300+ people weekly between Friday and Sunday.

This year, there has been a significant increase in the number and diversity of people dropping in for our lunch service. As food prices have increased, more seniors and community members are struggling to pay their grocery bills, leading them to access a meal program for the first time.

The connection between a full stomach and a sense of well-being is something we understand. We provide nutrient-rich foods incorporating veggies, fruit and protein into every meal, and do our best to accommodate preferences. We are grateful to our in-kind supporters who donate fresh produce and essential non-perishable goods. And we are blessed to partner with many community organizations, food banks and local businesses that donate staples, meat and prepared foods to us. Their ongoing assistance has been essential to helping us meet the growing demand for food, which we recognize is a human right for all. And with our commitment to the environment, we always aim for zero waste! The success of this program is only made possible with a very talented team of volunteers who rise to the challenge of being of service every time.

“A love of food crosses all boundaries. Nobody, under any circumstances, should be deprived of something delicious and healthy to eat. Donating to Mustard Seed is our small way of sharing our passion for food and preventing food waste, which is important when so many are suffering due to food insecurity.”

– *Daria Tkachenko, Store Manager, Rowe Farms Leslieville*



Food insecurity is closely linked to many negative health outcomes, including chronic physical and mental health problems.

The risk of food insecurity is higher for individuals and families that:

- have a low income
- are racialized
- rent, as opposed to own, their homes

According to Statistics Canada, almost one in five **(18.6%)** Torontonians experienced food insecurity in 2021.

Creating a Safe Home for Older Single Women

Fontbonne Place, nestled in the Riverside community, is a low-rise building with 18 affordable apartments for older single women. Each rent-geared-to-income apartment is a spacious one-bedroom unit that affords all tenants the dignity and respect of having a place they can call home. The following is an interview with two Fontbonne Place residents, Tracy and Heather, who bonded over their mutual love of creating with yarn while enjoying the beauty of their front courtyard.

FM: How long have you lived at Fontbonne Place?

Tracy: I have lived here for one year and seven months. A few years ago, I lived in a small apartment with other people in housing conditions no one should have to put up with. I moved to a shelter because it became so unbearable. A friend who knew I was having housing issues sent me an application to Fontbonne Place. Now I live in a one-bedroom apartment in a safe, clean and quiet building.

Heather: I have been here for 11 years. I used to live in a building that didn't have an elevator. It was getting too hard to go up and down the stairs with my laundry and groceries. I was volunteering at Mustard Seed, had seen what the apartments were like and knew that the building is women only and pet friendly—which is uncommon in many rent-geared-to-income places. They approved my application and I took the apartment sight unseen!

FM: Do you participate in any of the Fontbonne Ministries programming?

Tracy: When I first came here, I had nothing. I used the food, hygiene and clothing services. Now that I am more secure, I don't need them anymore. I have an apartment furnished with things I own and a storage space filled with supplies and food.

"I actually feel like I am getting ahead; I can't remember ever being in this position."

– Tracy

Heather: We both have signed up for Whimsical Wednesdays for Women and some craft programs they offer. I have helped lead a drop-in knitting group on Mondays where all community members are welcome, from beginners to those who would like to build up their knitting skills.

FM: Both of you are quite skilled at the yarn arts and have become fixtures in the Fontbonne Place courtyard. How did that come about?

Tracy: Even though I am a smoker, I am happy this is a non-smoking building. When I first moved here, I would go outside for a cigarette with my coffee and crocheting. Heather knits, and she would join me with whatever project she was working on. It just became our thing.

Heather: In the summer, you'll find us outside from 6 a.m. until 7 or 8 p.m. knitting and crocheting together. Other residents or members of the community started joining us for a chat and a coffee. During COVID, most people haven't been interacting in person much, but our time in the courtyard is quite social.

FM: What would you say is the best outcome of living at Fontbonne Place?

Tracy: I feel safe. I live in a great building, in a lovely neighbourhood with lots of green space and I have enough money to eat. I have been able to take care of health issues that I neglected because my life was so unstable. My dignity has been restored.



“As an older woman living alone, it can feel quite isolating. A surprise outcome of living here has been the new bonds I have formed. I hoped for, but didn’t expect, this kind of friendship at this stage in my life.”

– Heather



Research and lived experience in Toronto demonstrate that unaffordable housing, poor quality housing and housing instability are associated with negative **mental health and physical health outcomes.**



Toronto has one of the most expensive housing markets in Canada.



According to Statistics Canada, there were 1.4 million households in need in 2021.

Households are in core housing need when they live in unsuitable, inadequate or unaffordable dwellings, and are not able to afford alternative housing in the community.



Supporting the Well-being of Our Community



“Volunteering at the Clothing Boutique gives me an opportunity to live out the compassion of Christ. Serving the visitors and hearing some of their stories has put a face to poverty and homelessness in Toronto so that I see beyond the statistics and the controversial stories in the news.”

– Brenda, Volunteer



COMMITMENT TO PERSONAL WELL-BEING

Empowering Individuals by Supporting Their Basic Needs

Individuals experiencing homelessness, living below the poverty line or who are underemployed face significant barriers to self-care and personal hygiene. The Mustard Seed Clothing Boutique offers free, gently used clothing and an assortment of new hygiene products in a safe and respectful setting.

It is hard to cover basic needs when living on a fixed or limited income. A diverse group of people, including seniors, newcomers and people living in vulnerable situations, are happy guests of the Clothing Boutique—many of whom hear about the service from the Mustard Seed drop-in and referring partner agencies.

Dignity and compassion are two important Fontbonne values that guide how all our programs operate. The Clothing Boutique is set up to make visitors feel like they are having a personal shopping experience. Everything is organized according to size and displayed so that people can easily see what they like and make their own selection.

At the onset of the pandemic, we noticed more people asking for soap, body wash, shampoo and toilet paper. Last year, our clothing and hygiene services saw the highest growth of all our programs. We are blessed to receive regular donations from individuals, corporations and community groups to help us meet the increased demand.

Access to essential clothing and hygiene is a fundamental human right related to physical health and mental well-being. It affects how others see and treat us, but more importantly, how we feel about ourselves.



The hygiene cart is stocked with soap, moisturizer, toothpaste, deodorant and other personal care items.

What Is Hygiene Poverty?

The reality of low income is that it restricts people's options, leaving them caught between being able to pay rent, eat or be clean.



It is not being able to wash your hair because you can't afford shampoo.

It is not being able to replace a toothbrush that is worn out.

It is not being able to launder your clothes when needed.



Good Foot Care is Essential to Good Health but Often Gets Overlooked

Regular access to foot care can often identify and treat problems before they become an urgent concern requiring hospitalization, surgery and lengthy rehabilitation.

The Toronto Faith Community Downtown Hub (Faith+Hub) is a collaborative network between Fontbonne Ministries, Metropolitan United Church, The Cathedral Church of St. James and St. Michael's Cathedral that works together to address some of the needs of our vulnerable citizens. In 2021, Faith+Hub—led by Fontbonne Ministries—created a plan to expand foot care services to a critically underserved population in the Downtown East (DTE).

Good foot care, including healthy skin, nail care and proper footwear, is vital for everyone. For persons who are homeless or transient and who sometimes spend their entire day walking in the community, inadequate foot hygiene and ill-fitted shoes are often the reasons for various ailments, including calluses, corns, warts, severely ingrown nails, and worst of all, pain. Diabetic ulcers are also common in this population.

Accessing foot care is difficult, especially for individuals who can't afford to pay out of pocket for this essential service.

Fontbonne Ministries' Mustard Seed site, the Metropolitan United Church and St. James Cathedral Centre worked together to create welcoming and suitable spaces to treat clients, hire a chiropodist to be shared between the clinics, and purchase foot care equipment and supplies.

"Sometimes we have to get creative in our solutions, but regardless of the challenge, we aim for 100% success," says Dr. Minh Nguyen, Chiropodist at the Downtown East Clinics. "One of our clients was a person with dementia in the shelter system. Their issue was a chronic ingrown toenail causing severe pain when walking. The treatment was complicated because they didn't differentiate between pain and pressure and would scream every time I got near their foot. I devised a plan to use a topical anesthetic to desensitize the pain, and I used music and screen time as a distraction during the surgery. I got a free Darco shoe to accommodate bulky bandages and protect their foot post-surgery. I also built enough trust with them that they started to listen to me about the importance of proper hygiene."

To ensure there are no barriers to access, services and treatment are free; there is no requirement for an Ontario Health card, proof of citizenship or social assistance; and anonymous service is available upon request.

Thanks to generous support from La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso, starting in December 2021, three foot care clinics in Toronto's Downtown East began offering free foot care treatment to vulnerable individuals!





We are making a tangible difference with minimal resources. I treat people who can't afford the recommended medications for their ailment. Many need extended care and more social interaction to understand what needs to be done in their treatment plan. Without these clinics, their feet would go untreated and, in many cases, lead to other chronic health problems."

– Dr. Minh Nguyen, Chiropodist

While the primary goal of the clinics is to increase access to free chiropody service, foot care is often a gateway service to cultivating a trusting relationship. With trust comes the possibility of helping our clients navigate other critical primary care and social supports, ultimately enhancing the quality of their life.

"I tried to get a foot care appointment after realizing my feet needed care but couldn't find a free service to help. After I had a meal at the Mustard Seed drop-in, I got an appointment at their foot clinic. Doing that made me think of other areas of my life that I need to work on. I think I'd like to start addressing the issues regarding my housing again."

– A client who was referred to the clinic onsite by an intake worker

According to the Ontario Society of Chiropodists:



15%

of Canadians will develop a diabetes foot ulcer in their lifetime



85%

of all amputations are the result of a non-healing foot ulcer



More than half

of these amputations may have been prevented by appropriate footwear and more effective nail and foot care

Fostering Social Connection and Community



"Since my spouse passed away I have been so lonely. The visitor you sent has become a true friend. I can't tell you how much having this friendly visitor means to me...thank you."

– Participant of the
In Good Company program



Vulnerable Populations are Some of the Hardest Impacted by the Loneliness Crisis

Loneliness and social isolation can lead to numerous physical and mental health risks and even increase a person's risk of premature death. While all Fontbonne Ministries' services embody our mission to build strong relationships that are mutually supportive and collaborative, we have a variety of programs specifically designed to foster human connection and community—a service that has become even more crucial since the onset of the pandemic.

Fontbonne Ministries staff and volunteers take their cues from the people we serve. It starts with knowing someone's name—whatever they wish to be called—and meeting people where they are most comfortable. It demonstrates to our friends and guests that they are seen, known, valued and that they belong. Social isolation does not discriminate and affects people from diverse backgrounds. All three of our service locations (Mustard Seed, Village Mosaic and Studio on the Hill) engage in unique programming that brings people of different ethnicities, economic backgrounds, faiths, ages and ideals together through an array of activities—creating richer communities where things we all share in common are the focal point.

In Good Company is our program that fosters unique one-to-one relationships by providing friendly home visits to isolated individuals in need of emotional, spiritual and social support. Our volunteers cultivate cherished connections through conversations, short outings, occasional shopping trips and phone calls. The pandemic has surfaced issues of depression, anxiety and mental health concerns for some, and the need for this exceptional service continues to grow.

It became apparent early into the lockdowns caused by the pandemic that our senior population was disproportionately suffering from the isolation.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) in 2021, we implemented a pilot program to provide 15 seniors with iPads, data plans, technical support and virtual activities that would bring them together.

I have seen firsthand how connecting in a virtual environment can make a difference. One pilot participant is a gentle, kind person who lived an isolated life even before COVID. This person has much to offer and wants to be part of a community but suffers from social anxiety. The virtual activities allowed them to engage in a safe and comforting way. They have cultivated friendships and connections, decreasing their loneliness and isolation.

– AnnMarie Marcolin, Director of Community Programs and Partnerships

As the provincial public health restrictions of the past two years slowly lifted, connecting in person came back at all of our service sites, and we saw substantial growth in demand across many of our programs.

The number of onsite and outside (in the park) activities also increased last year as participants felt more comfortable being in the company of others. Small groups came together for meditation, recreational art, or creative pursuits like pottery and knitting. Larger group activities included open drop-ins and exercises ranging from gentle movement to yoga.

Whether in a group or one-on-one, virtual or in-person, across the programs and service locations the message was clear: people were starving for social connection.



“COVID restrictions required us to think outside the box. We know seniors rely on personal contact activities for their physical and mental well-being, so we went Dancing in the Park!”

– *Andrea Linton,
Manager, Village Mosaic,
Fontbonne Ministries*



Toronto Seniors Strategy 2.0 2018-2022 report:



The COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly harsh on the senior service sector and continues to inequitably impact seniors with each successive wave—incurring higher rates of illness for those in congregate care settings, and isolation for those living alone.

65+

For the first time, the number of people living in Toronto who are over the age of 65 has surpassed those who are under the age of 15.

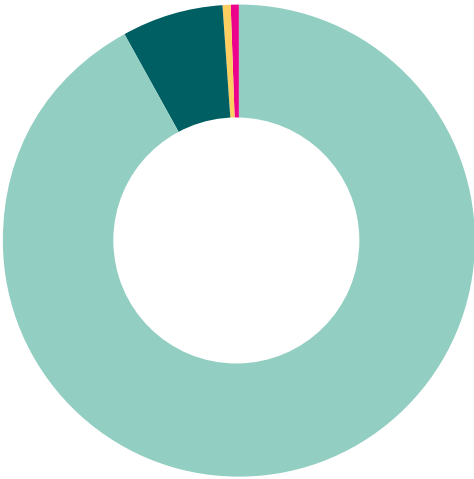


By 2031, one-quarter of Toronto’s population will be over the age of 60.

SOURCE OF COMMENTS: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/8bad-Toronto-Seniors-Strategy-2.0-Final-Report.pdf>

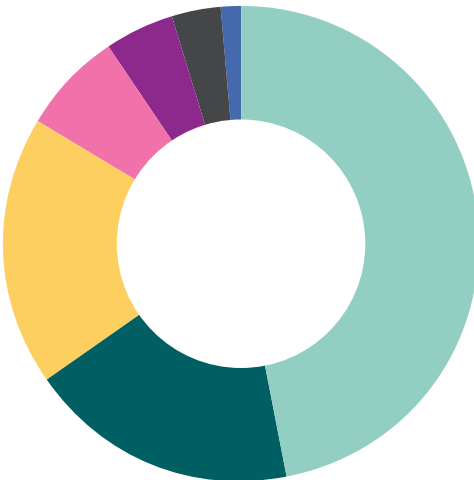
compassion :: supportive
friendship safe nourishment
relationships well-being
welcoming
community
safe HOSPITALITY
friendship
grateful: community
welcoming social RESPECT generosity DIGNITY
nourishment friendship WELL-BEING
hospitality DIGNITY
supportive SAFE
collaborative respect
friendship ...

Where the Money Goes



Revenue:
\$2,391,733

- Donations **92.1%**
- Rental Income **6.8%**
- Other Income **0.8%**
- Studio Income **0.3%**



Expenses:
\$2,204,350

- Program Expenses - Salaries/ Benefits, Supplies and Supports **47.0%**
- Property Expenses **18.4%**
- Salaries and Benefits - Management/Administration/ Fundraising **18.3%**
- Other Expenses **7.0%**
- Audit/Legal/Accounting Expenses **4.6%**
- Office Expenses **3.4%**
- Amortization Expenses **1.2%**

Fontbonne Ministries Revenue and Expenses

(September 1, 2021 – August 31, 2022)

Revenue

	2022	2021
Donations	\$ 2,202,839	\$ 2,145,014
Rental Income	162,261	169,130
Studio Income	7,125	2,396
Other Income	19,508	11,333
Total Revenue	\$ 2,391,733	\$ 2,327,873

Expenses

Salaries and Benefits - Management/Administration/Fundraising	\$ 403,011	\$ 203,904
Property Expenses	406,035	362,297
Program Expenses - Salaries/Benefits, Supplies and Support	1,036,314	980,285
Audit/Legal/Accounting Expenses	102,187	34,960
Office and Other Expenses	231,059	250,647
Amortization Expenses	25,744	11,600
Total Expenses	\$ 2,204,350	\$ 1,843,693



To receive a full copy of the financial statements, please contact
Fontbonne Ministries at 791 Queen Street East, Toronto ON M4M 1H6
Telephone: 416.465.2889 E-mail: info@fontbonneministries.ca

Fontbonne by the Numbers

(September 2021 – August 2022)

Group Events/
Social Interactions

387

One-on-One
Social Visits

3,587

Social Connection
Hours

3,951

Meals
Served

14,478

Good Food Markets
(GFM) Visits

753

Clothing & Care
Products Provided

11,320

Clothing Boutique
Visits

3,245

Well-Being
Programming Visits

3,792

Footcare
Visits

367

Total visits/acts of service = 26,222

Volunteer
Hours

5,109

Service Group
Volunteer
Hours

14

Student
Volunteer
Hours

1,656

Combined Total
Volunteer
Hours

6,779

Leadership Team

Executive Director
Hailee Morrison

Director, Mission Integration and Volunteers
Leanne Kloppenborg

Director, Community Programs and Partnerships
AnnMarie Marcolin

Board of Directors

Sister Georgette Gregory, CSJ, Chair
Sister Anne Marie Marrin, CSJ, Vice Chair
Joan Breech, Treasurer
Sister Annette Lacroix, CSJ
Patricia Stoddart
Hume Martin



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