



**FIRST  
UNITED**

# **2023 Annual Report**

**October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023**

# Message From Leadership



**FIRST UNITED** has been operating in the Downtown Eastside, responding to present and ongoing needs for nearly 140 years. With each passing year, we continue to be resolved to see our vision become a reality—a vision of a neighbourhood where everyone’s worth is celebrated, and all people thrive. When the community we serve is fraught with complex and long-standing issues like the criminalization and racialization of poverty, collective and personal trauma, homelessness, and the overdose crisis, how do we bridge the gap between our vision and where our community is today?

Through extensive discussions and evaluation sessions, we’ve identified three powerful actions to guide us: dignity, belonging, and justice. We work to ensure that the people we serve get access to their entitled human rights. We work to create spaces where everyone has a place to belong, feel welcomed and are supported. We work to break the cycles

of oppression and poverty that prevent community members from thriving. This is how we address the impact that we want to achieve.

To get there, we know that we need to continue our bold pursuit of justice. That means confronting harmful practices by continuing to advocate for policies that heal and rebuild relationships between the community and the systems that the community is forced to live within. We want community members to live in a world where they feel safe and seen, so they can flourish.

If you’ve been following our work this year, you’ll know that we have been walking a path to bridge gaps in the system that deny individuals and their communities dignity, belonging, and justice. We’ve been doing this and will continue to do so: by actively putting reconciliation into action; by designing and

constructing a building with seven storeys of affordable and supportive housing for Indigenous tenants; and by exerting pressure through our public advocacy and systems change work on governments to change laws that perpetuate injustices.

Although the journey is a long and arduous one, we’re determined in our pursuit of justice and remain committed to fulfilling our vision. We know that we’re backed by a community of values-aligned individuals and groups who want to see the DTES thrive. Together, we are powerful. Thank you for your support of and commitment to FIRST’s mission and vision.

**Amanda Burrows**, Executive Director  
**Dr. Heather F. Clarke**, Chair, Board of Directors





# Vision Mission Values

Our vision is a neighbourhood where every person's worth is celebrated and all people thrive.

We seek a just society by nurturing each person's spirit through ministry, housing, advocacy, and community services.

Our values are acceptance, discernment, empathy, accountability, and social justice.

## Dignity.

We believe that everyone has equal value and deserves to be treated with dignity.

## Belonging.

We create and facilitate a space where all are welcome and can feel a sense of belonging.

## Justice.

We continue to fight for justice to break cycles of oppression.



# We're on the Frontlines

For nearly 140 years, **FIRST UNITED CHURCH COMMUNITY MINISTRY SOCIETY** has sought to build better futures in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside by providing essential services, community connection, and healing. Shoulder to shoulder with our community, we operate from a harm reduction perspective. As a faith-based service provider, we welcome and affirm every individual from all walks of life without exception. At our core is the mission, ministry, and call to social justice of the United Church of Canada.



## FIRST UNITED Board of Directors 2022-2023

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ▶ Dr. Heather F. Clarke, <i>Chair</i>          | ▶ Paul Mitchell-Banks                           |
| ▶ The Rev. Dr. Brian Thorpe, <i>Vice Chair</i> | ▶ Lauren Telford                                |
| ▶ David Walkem, <i>Secretary</i>               | ▶ Jeff Bay                                      |
| ▶ Dave Munroe, <i>Treasurer</i>                | ▶ The Rev. Jennifer Goddard-Sheppard (on leave) |
| ▶ Elizabeth Kerklaan                           | ▶ John Christie                                 |
| ▶ Jacob Black-Lock                             | ▶ Jeremy Hermanson                              |
| ▶ Aaron Wilson                                 | ▶ Treena Duncan (non-voting member)             |
| ▶ Scott Griffin                                |   |

## Leadership Team 2022-2023

- ▶ Amanda Burrows, *Executive Director* (as of August 2023)
- ▶ Natalie Gobis Cutayne, *Director of Human Resources*
- ▶ The Rev. Jennifer Goddard-Sheppard, *Interim Spiritual Care Director*
- ▶ Keely Hale, *Director of Community Services*
- ▶ Katie Koncan, *Director of Development and Communications*
- ▶ Dr. Sarah Marsden, *Director of Systems Change and Legal*
- ▶ Rob Vandermey, *Senior Director of Finance and Administration*



# Programs and Services



## Meals

Our Community Meals program continues to serve three meals a day to shelter residents, and weekday lunches to Downtown Eastside community members from our food truck. This year, in spite of rising food costs, we managed to serve more than double (2.5 times) the number of meals and snacks than the previous year. From our food truck, we've been consistent in serving an average of 1,000 meals to the community each week. In addition to regular meals, we also started serving lemonade, hot chocolate, and other refreshments and snacks for community members.



## Community Help Desk

Our Community Help Desk continues to operate out of its temporary location at 501 East Hastings. To remain adaptive to the community needs, we took initiative to pack up a wagon and hand out supplies, drinks, and snacks on the streets. We continued to let folks know where they can find us if they need essential items like socks, toiletries and harm reduction supplies. We also let them know that they can access our Mail and Phone program, allowing them to make calls and pick up mail if they don't have a fixed address.



## Shelter

Our inclusive shelter at 467 Alexander Street provides a warm and dry place for folks to sleep. In the summer of 2023, we added two more beds, bringing our total number to 51 beds. Our services are low barrier, accepting folks who are in active addiction, have pets, are trans, and have needs that can't be met at other shelters. Shelter residents can stay for as long as they need while they work with the case planner to find housing solutions. This fiscal year, we housed 18 shelter residents, helping them to move from our emergency shelter to longer-term, stable and secure housing.



## Taxes

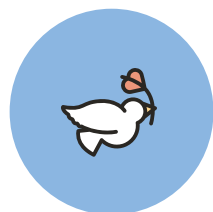
This was the busiest year on record for our Tax Program, reflecting the high and growing need for this service in the DTES community. Access to tax support can change a person's life, providing a gateway to housing, pension benefits, and social assistance programs. That's why the Tax Coordinator worked diligently throughout the year, responding to the increased need for tax support, processing 162% more dollars in tax returns and assisting almost 1,000 more clients than the previous year. We also partnered with agencies in the community like The Bloom Group, helping tenants with their taxes.





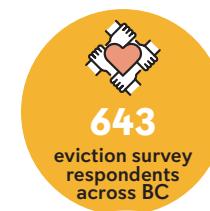
## Legal Advocacy

Legal Advocacy continued to take on thousands of cases this year, providing low-income community members with much-needed legal support because we believe that everybody deserves access to justice. Legal advocates help with a range of issues, including tenancy-related issues like repairs and unfair evictions, problems with welfare or disability, and problems with old age pension benefits. The majority of cases are tenancy-related as we continue to face an eviction crisis in the city and province, and our advocates work hard to prevent people from becoming homeless by fighting unjust evictions.



## Spiritual Care

This year, Spiritual Care has been intentional about the ministry of presence—creating opportunities to build connections in the community. This meant being present during lunch service at the food truck, and attending important community events like the DTES powwow and Women’s Memorial March. The team also set up a weekly Blessing Booth on the corner of Jackson and Hasting to offer prayer, blessings, or affirmations to those who requested it. Spiritual Care also introduced the healing power of expressive arts for residents at our shelter. Several times a week, the Indigenous Spiritual Care Chaplain spends time with shelter residents, engaging in expressive arts activities like beading, painting, and textiles. These sessions help build trust, healing and relationships, and provide a safe space for residents to engage in conversations and seek spiritual support as needed.



## Systems Change

In-hand with our frontline work in the community, we also prioritize systems change work to break the cycle of poverty and change systems that keep people marginalized. This year was a big one for Systems Change, with the launch of our innovative online BC Eviction Map in May 2023. We plotted data from our eviction survey onto an interactive map that showed where evictions are happening in the province, to whom, and what the impacts are, with the goal of making an evidence-based case for law reform. By the end of the fiscal year, we had 643 survey respondents from across the province.

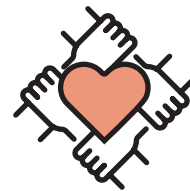


In the summer, we sent written letters to government to advocate for important changes to tenancy law. One was to protect tenants’ rights to adequate cooling during hot weather, and another was to stop misuse of “landlord’s use” evictions.

As part of our commitment to putting reconciliation into action, we also facilitated eight Indigenous housing justice circles, in partnership with frontline Indigenous organizations, to listen and understand housing justice priorities in Indigenous communities.



# Public Advocacy



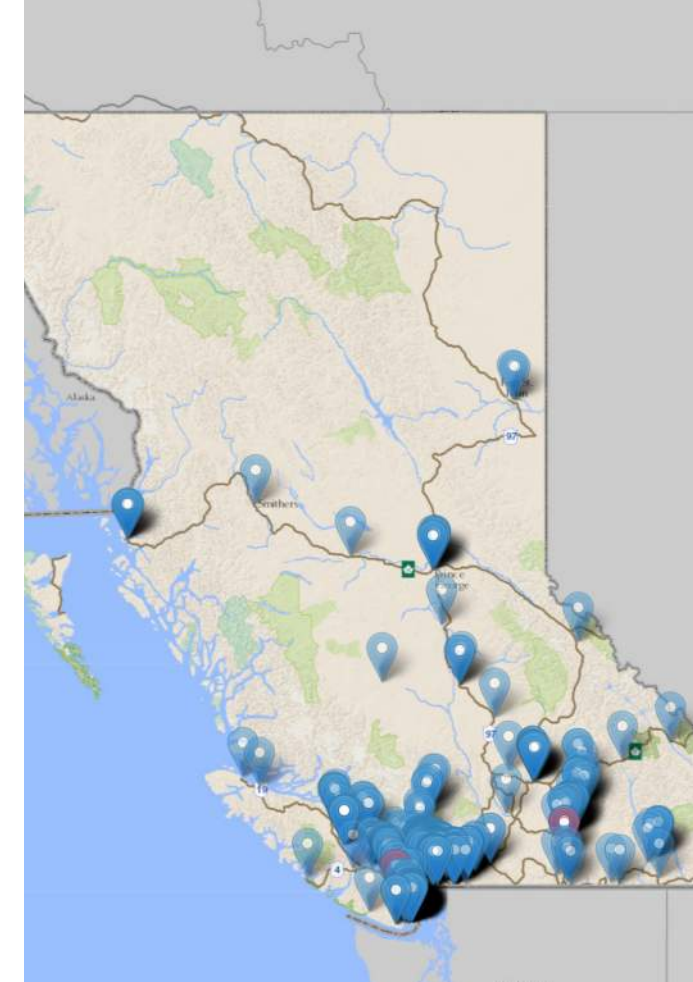
Systemic change is necessary to end injustices like the criminalization of poverty, homelessness, and overdose deaths. This year, we continued to bring these issues to the forefront, educating and raising awareness through various forms of media, and organizing petitions and letter-writing campaigns to encourage public support. We continue to meet the pressing needs of the community, but know that we must inspire collective action to see systemic change.

In the media, we responded to issues that arose throughout the year by publishing 3 op-eds in The Vancouver Sun. Following Vancouver City Council's vote to close the Renter's Office, we wrote about the negative impacts this vote would have, including increasing displacement and homelessness. When a Vancouver City Council item contained an amendment for grant recipients to communicate "in a respectful manner," we boldly shared that as a mission-driven organization that

receives grants from the city, we were disturbed by the implication that publicly criticizing harmful policies could result in a denial of funding and that non-profit partners would be threatened with surveillance. And as we continued to experience the effects of climate change, we wrote about why there should be specific laws to protect tenants' rights to use air conditioning in their homes.

When we launched our BC Eviction Map in May 2023, we received a notable amount of press coverage that allowed us to share what we were learning about the impacts of eviction in the province. Amanda Burrows and Dr. Sarah Marsden were interviewed on TV, print, and radio about the prevalence of "landlord's use" evictions and the disproportionate impacts that evictions have on Indigenous tenants. The issues that community members in the DTES face are not isolated to this postal code, and by leveraging provincial reach we hope to illustrate to policymakers that provincial action is needed.

We also continued to mobilize our community of supporters and the general public to advocate for change through letter writing and petition signing. To address the ongoing affordable housing crisis, we created and circulated an online petition, asking the mayor of Vancouver to work with provincial and federal governments to prioritize affordable housing for all. Over 500 people signed the petition to Mayor Ken Sim. In the spring, participants joined us to ask the Canadian government for low-income CERB (Canada Emergency Response Benefit) amnesty for low-income Canadians to prevent the exacerbation of poverty and homelessness. For International Overdose Awareness Day, we organized a letter-writing campaign asking the Government of British Columbia to prioritize harm reduction strategies following a spread of disinformation about the toxic drug crisis. Over 200 letters were sent to BC MLAs.





# Reconciliation in Action

This year, we continued with our commitment to putting reconciliation into action, paying attention to the ways that we could take specific actions, listen, and amplify the voices and causes of Indigenous communities.

We hired an Indigenous Outreach Coordinator who joined the Systems Change team to work on projects relating to racial justice and decolonial housing justice. To learn more about the specific landlord-tenant issues that Indigenous communities face, we partnered with frontline Indigenous organizations to host eight Housing Talking Circles. Facilitated by Indigenous Elders, the talking circles gave us a chance to listen and better understand the impacts that these issues (evictions, repair issues, cultural safety, respectful relationships, family, etc.) had on Indigenous communities. Based on what we learned, we're now moving forward with creating and delivering housing justice workshops on priority issues.

For the Lenten season, Spiritual Care launched a truth-telling themed calendar to work towards fulfilling Call to Action #60 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The call asks church leaders to collaborate with Indigenous spiritual leaders, survivors and others to develop and teach a curriculum on "the history and legacy of religious conflict in Aboriginal families and communities, and the responsibility that churches have to mitigate such conflicts and prevent spiritual violence." Although Call #60 is directed at church and religious leaders, we encouraged all to join us and embark on this important work. The calendar featured small daily actions and resources that encourage education, evaluation, giving, and other ways to fulfill Call to Action #60.

In the summer, we stood in solidarity with families who called on governments to search a Winnipeg landfill for their loved ones' remains. Although this was taking place in Manitoba, we



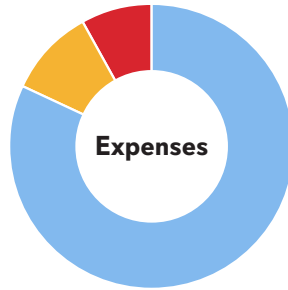
recognized this as a social justice issue, and acknowledged our responsibility to take action against injustice—especially because the injustice of MMIWG2S+ continues to devastate Indigenous communities across the country. We encouraged our supporters to join us by writing a letter to the Manitoba premier and by sharing the United Church of Canada's #SearchtheLandfill social media graphics to help raise awareness.

We know that the work of reconciliation is ongoing and we remain committed to pursuing reconciliation in our organization, in and through our work.

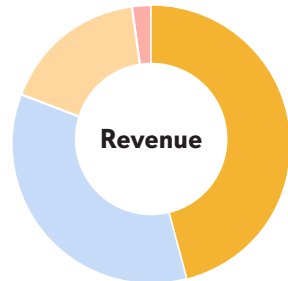




# Financial Statements



Charitable activities	\$	3,890,736	82	%
Fundraising & communications	\$	494,893	10	%
Admin & facilities	\$	352,551	8	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,738,180</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>%</b>



Government	\$	2,201,464	46	%
Donations & sponsorships	\$	1,655,396	35	%
Grants	\$	805,548	17	%
Other	\$	107,232	2	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,769,640</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>%</b>

## Shelter Financials

Our shelter provides immediate, emergency, and life-saving support to hundreds of community members each year. The shelter is exclusively funded by BC Housing and represents 94% of our government revenue as part of our financial statements.



**\$2,075,510**  
Shelter Revenue

**\$2,172,848**  
Shelter Expenses

**(\$97,338)**  
Shelter Shortfall

The shelter shortfall will be reviewed by BC Housing and is likely to be reimbursed in future fiscal years. We continue to work with them as a trusted partner to review the financial needs and reimbursement schedule for this service.

Overall, we're pleased to have an overall surplus of \$31,460 for the year, indicating a strong financial position that we continue to hold.

# Breaking Ground at 320 East Hastings



It's hard to believe that our redevelopment journey began six years ago. It's been a long, exciting, and challenging road, but finally, at the end of the fiscal year, we reached a pivotal redevelopment milestone: Groundbreaking.

In October 2022, we were four months into what eventually proved to be a 12-month demolition process. The discovery of higher-than-expected amounts of asbestos in the nearly 60-year-old building required us to follow specialized WorkSafe and hazmat procedures to ensure the safety of both workers on site and community members in the neighbourhood.

Despite this setback, the project continued to receive strong support, and that fall we confirmed an incredible \$1.25 million in new corporate contributions. This included a new \$1 million donor, Sandstorm Gold.

It was a strong lead-up to our fall campaign, which kicked off in November 2022. Through a mix of print and digital media, TV, radio, and outdoor advertisements, we again sought to raise greater awareness about our organization, our redevelopment and the issues faced in the Downtown Eastside. Growing recognition of our work helped us attract new donors and earn increased media attention.

By early 2023, the cumulative impact of demolition and permitting delays combined with rising interest rates, inflation, and material costs required us to increase our fundraising goal from \$30 million to \$37 million. Increases were announced at our Annual General Meeting in March and were reflective of industry-wide cost increases experienced by development projects across the country.

After hazmat work concluded in May 2023, exterior demolition proceeded quickly. We captured a video of the entire process using a time lapse camera so that we could share the historic moment with our donors and community. Before the bulldozers moved in, Interim Spiritual Care Director Rev. Jennifer Goddard-Shepard walked the perimeter of the building to offer a final blessing to the work and the history held within the building's walls.

Cuttings were taken from the magnolia tree on site in the hope that new saplings could be nurtured. Unfortunately, none took; however, the new building will include six trees, three each on the Hastings and Gore sidewalks, to honour our long tradition of providing shade. The rooftop cross was also saved so that it can be creatively repurposed in the new building.

Come August, the last well-worn bricks were gone, and shovels went into the dirt.

By September 30, 2023, we secured \$27.4 million for the capital campaign. Excavation and shoring work continued into the fall. Thank you to the First Forward Cabinet, Communities of Faith, businesses, and individuals who supported First Forward in its second year.



# Governments confirm funding for housing at 320 East Hastings

In May 2023, BC Housing confirmed our Final Project Approval (FPA), enabling us to also finalize funding support for the housing portion of the project.

Together, all three levels of government have contributed a combined total of **over \$40 million** to the housing portion of the project, including:

- ▶ \$5.15 million in federal funding through CMHC via the National Housing Co-Investment Fund
- ▶ \$28.4 million from the provincial government via BC Housing, including \$15.3 million from the Building BC: Indigenous Housing Fund and \$13.06 million from the Supportive Housing Fund
- ▶ \$4.83 million from the City of Vancouver through the Community Housing Incentive Program (CHIP) and \$1.9 million in municipal waivers

BC Housing has also provided generous construction financing to ensure the timely completion of the project as we continue to fundraise costs for the four-floor FIRST UNITED services podium.



Thank you to the dedicated members of our First Forward Cabinet.

The Rev. Cari Copeman-Haynes, *Co-chair*

Rudy Kerklaan, *Co-chair*

Mike Harcourt, *Honourary Chair*

Dr. Heather F. Clarke, *Board Chair*

Amanda Burrows, *Executive Director*

Trista Baldwin, *Campaign Manager*

Don Evans

Jim Fletcher

Mark Paetkau

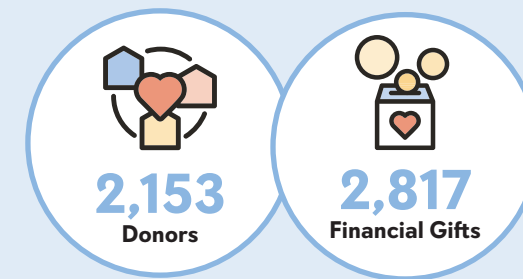
Randy Smallwood

Nancy Trott

The Rev. Nancy Talbot

## Thank You

FIRST UNITED would not be what it is without the individuals, businesses, Communities of Faith, foundations, partners, and volunteers who support our work and believe in our mission. You're the reason we're able to serve thousands of Downtown Eastside residents every year. We hope you can celebrate these achievements with us because they're yours, too. Thank you.



## Frontline Monthly Donors

Frontline Monthly Donors play an important role in providing a stable foundation for us to continue our work throughout the year. We call them "frontline" because their monthly donations support our frontline work by helping us meet the immediate needs of our neighbours, while also providing the reliability to help us plan for the future.





# Community Donors

Our group of Community Donors are made up of thousands of values-aligned individuals who want to see a more equitable society and want to do their part to provide survival-supports for our Downtown Eastside neighbours. About 50% of our revenue is made up of gifts from donors and funders, helping us bring essential services, community connection, and healing to the DTES. Thank you to each and every Community Donor for choosing to support our programs.

Listed below are Community Donors in the Leadership Circle who have given \$5,000+ to our programs and services in the fiscal year.

- 

7 Anonymous Donors
- 

Daniel & Loretta Bogert O'Brien
- 

Robyn Brasell
- 

Florence Brownridge
- 

Bob & Joan Burrows
- 

Arlene Clark
- 

Michael Cormack & Jennifer Drake
- 

The Crosby Family Fund *held at Nicola Wealth Private Giving Foundation*
- 

Ellis Foundation Inc.
- 

Fletcher Family Foundation
- 

Chris Grauer
- 

Pauline Higgins
- 

Philip Holton & Isobel James
- 

Ian & Billie Housego
- 

David Jiles & Carol Denny
- 

Heather & Trevor Johnstone
- 

Elizabeth & Rudy Kerklaan
- 

Michael Konnert
- 

The Lightburn Family Fund *held at Vancouver Foundation*
- 

The McGrane-Pearson Endowment Fund *held at Vancouver Foundation*
- 

The Ruby Fund *held at the Vancouver Foundation*
- 

Patricia & Rudy North
- 

Pentony-Woolwich & Siemens Family Fund *held at Nicola Wealth Private Giving Foundation*
- 

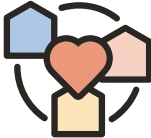
James Pond
- 

Shirley Sharf
- 

Donald & Jane Shumka
- 

The Stonkus Foundation
- 


The Alma Van Dusen Fund *held at Vancouver Foundation*





# Communities of Faith


Communities of Faith are local congregations that faithfully support our pursuit of justice, equity and healing for the Downtown Eastside. We're so grateful for the generosity and commitment shown by Communities of Faith and how they continue to show up for the most vulnerable in our society.


Listed below are Communities of Faith who've given \$1,000+ in support of our programs and services.


- 


Aldergrove United Church
- 


Deer Lake United Church
- 


Gilmore Park United Church
- 


Highlands United Church
- 


Mt. Seymour United Church
- 


Richmond United Church
- 


Sicamous United Church
- 


St. Stephen's United Church, Vancouver
- 


Trinity United Church, Creston
- 

Tsawwassen United Church
- 

St. Andrew's United Church North Vancouver
- 

Trinity United Church Women Port Coquitlam
- 

United Church of Canada
- 

Vancouver Unitarians
- 

West Vancouver United Church Women



# Friends of First

Friends of First have made an exemplary commitment to the Downtown Eastside, choosing to invest in the future of the neighbourhood by putting **FIRST UNITED** in their will. Their lasting gift will make it possible for community members to continue to experience dignity, belonging, and justice for generations to come.

- 

23 Anonymous Friends
- 

Bill Booth & Tom Hutchinson
- 

Florence Brownridge
- 

Bob & Joan Burrows
- 

Dr. Heather F. Clarke
- 

Judith Donaldson
- 

Jan & Joan Drabek
- 

Don Evans
- 

Doreen Gardner Brown
- 

Ian & Billie Housego
- 

Nancy Jefferson
- 

Sharon Johnson
- 

Diana Matrick
- 

Lawrence & Jean Matrick
- 

Bob Miller & Barbara Rendell
- 

Colleen Dunn
- 

Janet Reid
- 

Brian & Heather Smith
- 

Robert & Ellen Smith
- 

Gordon & Daphne Squire
- 

Gordon Tolman
- 

Floyd Wartnow

## Realized Bequests

We'd like to honour the Friends of First who have left us this year. Although they're no longer with us, their spirit of care and compassion for the DTES continues through their legacy gift.

- 

Marilyn Clark
- 

Marketa Goetz-Stankiewicz
- 

Alma Heller
- 

Marie Refausse
- 

Ailsa Zaenker



# Community Partners

Community Partners are a diverse group of businesses that have chosen to support our work because of their belief in our mission and vision. We're honoured to recognize our Community Partners below. Thank you for giving back to the Downtown Eastside community.































Leadership support for First Forward











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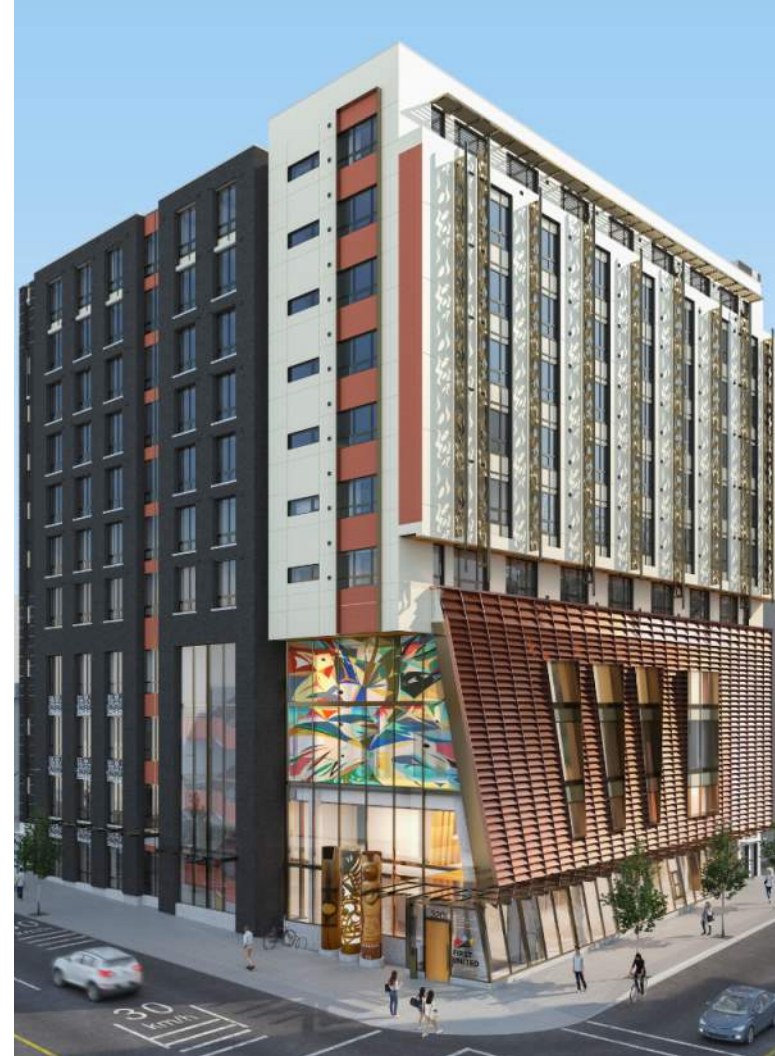


# Community Funders

Community Funders are partners at foundations and within government that help make our work in the Downtown Eastside possible. Their support of our programs and services helps provide essential services, community connection, and healing to those who call the DTES home.



One Anonymous Funder | Charles Johnson Charitable Fund | Lotte & John Hecht Memorial Foundation  
 Sant Jalaram Charitable Foundation of North America | The Hamber Foundation  
 The McLean Foundation | ThanksVegan Foundation



# Thanks for Moving First Forward

Over 300 new donors contributed to our capital campaign during our 2023 fiscal year. Combined with past donors, over 800 individuals, businesses, foundations and Communities of Faith have taken action to support our redevelopment project and promote healing and reconciliation in the Downtown Eastside.

To our First Forward donors, listed below, your collective effort helped us raise over \$27 million by September 30, 2023. We are deeply humbled by your generosity and your shared commitment to helping us build the future of FIRST. Thank you.

## Leadership Gifts

625 Powell Street Foundation  
 Pacific Mountain Regional Council  
 Sandstorm Gold Royalties  
 St. Andrew's-Wesley United Church  
 Wheaton Precious Metals Corp.



## Transformative Gifts

2 Anonymous Donors  
 Aldergrove United Church  
 Bob and Barb Atkinson  
 B2Gold  
 Heather Clarke  
 Comart Foundation  
 Connor, Clark & Lunn Foundation  
 The Denny-Jiles Family  
 Gilmore Park United Church  
 The Hieros Foundation  
 Jubilee United Church  
 Rudy and Elizabeth Kerklaan  
 The Krogseth Foundation  
 The Lightburn Family Fund *held at the Vancouver Foundation*  
 The McGrane-Pearson Endowment Fund *held at the Vancouver Foundation*  
 The Pejman Family  
 Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy  
 Carol Smallwood  
 Randy Smallwood  
 The Sullivan Family  
 United Church of Canada  
 Y.P. Heung Foundation

## Inspirational Gifts

Amanda Burrows  
 John Charlesworth  
 Rob and Cari Copeman-Haynes  
 R. and V. Dunsterville  
 Derpak White Spencer LLP  
 Nancy Heckman  
 The Kaatza Foundation  
 Sharon Kim  
 Carmen Lansdowne  
 The Lindsay Family Fund  
 The LRJ Charitable Foundation  
 Brian and Gilly Marshall  
 Mt. Seymour United Church  
 Dave Munroe  
 Bill and Pat Sexsmith  
 The Shewan Foundation  
 Doug Smart and Merrilee Thompson  
 Norma Smith  
 Brian Thorpe  
 Nancy Trott and Ian Hanoomansingh  
 Rob Vandermey  
 Webster's Whonnock  
 Dean Winram

## Champion Gifts

4 Anonymous  
 Susan Alexander  
 Debra Anderson  
 Army Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada  
 Trista Baldwin  
 Robert J. Brown Family Fund  
 Cloverdale United Church  
 Treena Duncan and Will Sparks  
 Gulf & Fraser Foundation  
 Janet Gear and Dan Chambers  
 Jennifer Goddard-Sheppard  
 Henry Goldbeck  
 Donald Haskins  
 Jeremy and Diane Hermanson

Joyce Hodge  
 Investors Group Financial Services Inc.  
 Peggy Jensen  
 Knox United Church - Vancouver  
 Andrew Lew  
 Chuck Lew, K.C.  
 Alan and Sydney MacKenna  
 George Mackie  
 Susan McAlpine  
 Kathleen McTaggart  
 Barbara A. McWilliams  
 Jan Miko  
 Barry Morley  
 Elizabeth Mulvaney

The Open Purse Fund  
 Helen Overgaard  
 Linda Quan  
 The Randall Foundation  
 Bill and Heather Riedl  
 Wendy Simpson  
 Robert and Ellen Smith  
 St. James Anglican Church  
 William Veenstra  
 Mike Walker  
 Wawanesa Insurance  
 Aaron Wilson

This list includes all our Transformative and Leadership donors, as well as new donors who have contributed \$1,000 or more and whose gift or pledge payment was received on or before September 30, 2023. Later gifts will be recognized in our 2023-24 annual report. Prior gifts are recognized on our website. We do our best to honour recognition preferences, but mistakes happen! If we've made an error, email us to let us know at [donations@firstunited.ca](mailto:donations@firstunited.ca).

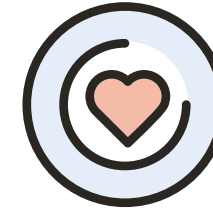


## Food Truck Sponsor Highlight:

# Turner Construction Company

With the successful implementation of our FIRST Food Truck, we were able to launch our Food Truck Sponsorship program. The program provides a unique way for groups to support our Community Meal program while also providing a valuable team building opportunity for employees or team members. In its inaugural year, we hosted 13 corporate and faith groups who joined us for lunchtime meal service, providing a glimpse into how our programs work, and a hands-on opportunity to engage with the community.

One of the groups that joined us for food truck engagements this year was Turner Construction Company—the company that built the commissary kitchen on Clark Dr., where kitchen staff prepare community meals. This fiscal year, two groups from Turner participated in two separate food truck engagements.



*“These experiences serve as a powerful reminder of the importance of community and compassion.”*

Feedback from participants illustrates the positive collective and personal impact that this experience can have. Following their engagement, Turner shared: “It is so easy to get caught up in modern life and lose sight of what is truly important. This experience reminded us of the importance of being humble and left us with a powerful and lasting sense of extreme gratitude.”

They also shared the value of taking part in something as a group, and how joining forces can make a positive difference.

“These experiences serve as a powerful reminder of the importance of community and compassion, highlighting the impact we can have when we come together to support those who are less fortunate. The smiles and gratitude from the individuals served was heartwarming and reinforced the idea that small acts of kindness can make a substantial difference in the lives of others.”





# FIRST UNITED



**firstunited.ca**

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