



*“Firstfruits is a comfortable place where I can go to share my faith and learn.”*



# Firstfruits

2023 Annual Report



## A Divine Dozen

Twelve is a number that is very common in daily life. Our year is divided into twelve months. Our clocks are divided into 12 hours. Our breakfast often comes out of a carton of twelve.

The number 12 is one of the foundations of Scripture. The word “twelve” is recorded 189 times in the Bible. Jesus’s choice of 12 apostles along with the 12 tribes of Israel are just a few examples.

The number 12 symbolizes God’s power and authority, as well as serving as a perfect governmental foundation. It can also symbolize completeness.

As we complete our twelfth year at Firstfruits it only seems right to reflect on God’s power in establishing the firm foundation that Firstfruits is for so many women.

Throughout our twelve years many women have come and gone. Some have come and never left. God provided these women with just what they needed when they needed it. The community of Firstfruits provided the venue through which God’s love could reach many.

A community built on acceptance, belonging and God’s love, Firstfruits provides a firm foundation on which women can build their spiritual lives and their daily lives. It’s a gathering place for women who are looking for more.

More connection, more peace, more laughter, more joy, more purpose, more knowledge, more support, more encouragement, more enrichment, more creativity, more truth, more prayer, more love. Just to name a few. Twelve to be exact.

With your continued support and God’s faithfulness our twelfth year turned out to be our best year yet!

**Joan**



## Firstfruits Board Members

Joan Carey – *President*  
Mary Jo Nott – *Vice President*  
Tina Payne – *Secretary*  
Debbie Gallo – *CPA Treasurer*  
Pamela Beckman  
Victoria Saunders McAfee  
Kerry Schnier

*“It doesn’t matter where you are in your faith journey, all are accepted and heard.”*





## **Firstfruits is a movement in the spiritual community for women looking for More. Our lineup of offerings this year provided just that.**

### **More Truth**

#### *Weekly Word*

Each Monday we study the readings for the upcoming weekend's mass.

### **More Support and Connection**

#### *Well Time*

Three Wednesdays a month we gather with our Zoom community for a peer led discussion on spiritual topics and share personal insights all in a spirit of friendship and laughter.

#### *Well Time and More*

The first Wednesday of the month we gather in person at the Firstfruits space in Elm Grove for an inspirational speaker, a delicious lunch and an opportunity to connect.

#### *Women's Christmas*

For four weeks after Christmas, we gathered to celebrate the Celtic tradition of a Women's Christmas. The theme of our discussions this year was Home, using the writings of Jan Richardson.

### **More Knowledge and Enrichment**

#### *Called and Gifted Workshop*

We provide the Catherine of Siena Institute's Called and Gifted Workshop for those looking to discern their spiritual gifts and where God might be calling them to use those gifts.

#### *Dead Sea Scrolls video series*

This eight-week video series with Fr. Dave Pivonka and Dr. John Bergsma helped us see Jesus in a new light. It gave us a window on Jewish life at the time of Jesus.

### **More Peace and Prayer**

#### *Abiding Prayer*

Once a month we gather for group prayer. This hour of deep prayer introduces participants to the many facets of intercessory prayer. It provides an opportunity to pray for ourselves, each other, our community and our world.

#### *The Many Faces of Prayer*

This four-week series gave us insights into four types of prayer. Visio Divina, Centering Prayer, Ignatian Prayer and Conversational Prayer.

### **More Joy and Laughter**

#### *Pray and Play*

We kicked off our 2022-23 season with an evening of Prayer and Play! It was such a fun evening we had to flick the lights on and off to let the women know it was time to leave!

### **More Creativity**

#### *Reinvent Advent*

The four weeks leading up to Advent can be hectic and we can lose sight of what the season is all about. We provided weekly opportunities for women to let their creative side out and at the same time check off some items on their holiday shopping list. The art projects each week made perfect Christmas gifts!

### **More Connection with God**

#### *I Thirst Lenten series*

For the 40 days of Lent, we independently studied Joseph Langford's Book I Thirst then met every three weeks in person to share our insights from this life changing compilation of Mother Teresa's writings on the thirst of God for us.

### **More Outlets for Giving and Serving**

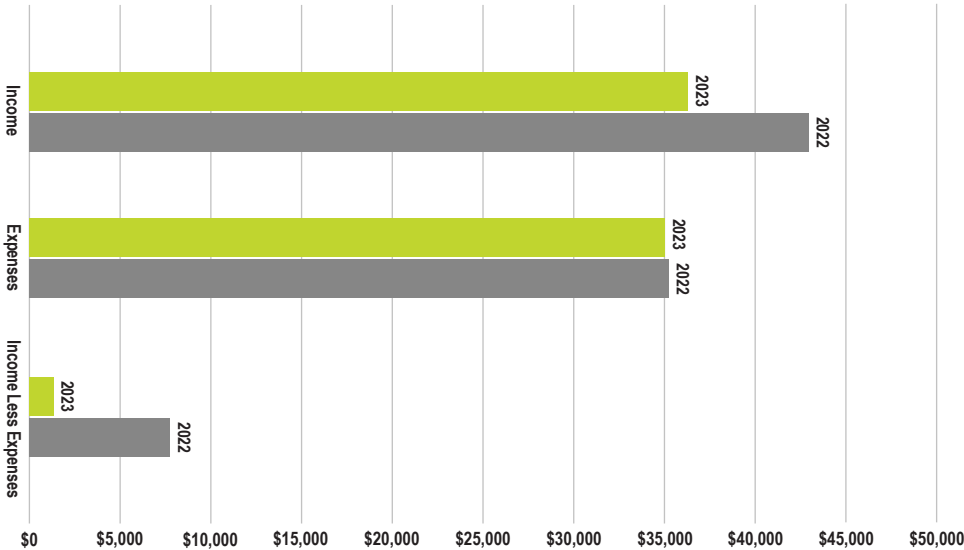
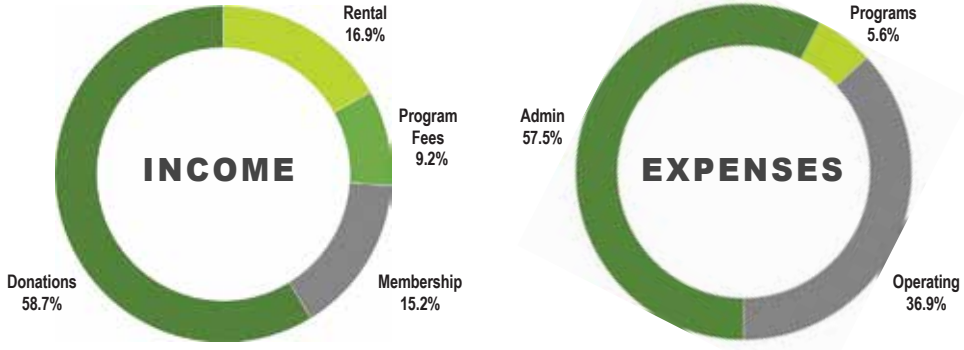
*MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary Partnership including the Meal Program and Fall, Christmas and Spring Giveaway Events*

Our involvement with MacCannon Brown and the community she serves, through her Homeless Sanctuary, continues to grow. We provide sandwich lunches twice a month and a hot lunch for 100 guests quarterly. We have helped with a school supply giveaway in Fall, a Christmas gift distribution and a Spring bicycle and toy distribution as well as providing help with sorting clothing donations.

**With the generous support of Firstfruit's donors, members, and participants, we will continue to be a place for more!**



# 2023 In Numbers



## Donor List

- Jean Adamczyk
- Pamela Beckman
- Corey Boldt
- Sheila Champa
- Carol Double
- Mary Ellen Felde
- Joanne Foran
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- Mary and Dave Stachowiak
- Jamee and John Stanley
- Jill Varick
- Thelma Walker
- Pam Westmont
- Patty Witt



*“Firstfruits provides a safe environment to openly share and grow my faith.”*

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