



**St. Aidan's**  
Society

# 2024 Annual Report



**Empowering Seniors,  
Strengthening Community**



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# Our Values

St. Aidan's Society staff share a core set values and beliefs. These values and beliefs guide staff as they deliver programs and services and are as follows:

- ▶ All people have an inherent right to be free from neglect and abuse.
- ▶ All people deserve compassion and support.
- ▶ All people, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, cultural background, religious affiliation, or socio-economic status must be treated with dignity and respect.
- ▶ All people have strengths and existing skills and these strengths and skills should be leveraged and used to help those in need achieve personal, meaningful change that can be sustained over time.
- ▶ Staff are always accountable to make decisions that are in the best interests of the people served.
- ▶ Staff must continuously strive to improve the quality of the programs and services delivered.
- ▶ Staff must measure and evaluate how successful programs and services are at making a positive impact on the people served and the community.

## Mission

To ensure that older adults are valued, respected, and have opportunities to thrive in community.

## Vision

Older adults experience improved quality of life as they age.



# Message from the Executive Director

As I reflect on 2024, I do so with profound gratitude. This year has been personally challenging for me, marked by loss and grief that tested my resilience in ways I could not have anticipated. These experiences have deepened my appreciation of the importance of connection, support, and community—values that are at the heart of everything we do to serve seniors.

This year, we proudly served a record number of older adults, connecting them to vital supports, fostering independence, reducing isolation, and empowering them to thrive in their later years. Achieving meaningful outcomes has remained our guiding light. However, with this success comes the challenge of keeping pace with growing demand. Our programs have faced increasing pressure, resulting in waiting lists in some areas. This is a testament to the trust the older adult community places in us and a reminder of the critical role we play. It also underscores the need for continued investment and innovation to meet these needs.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to our incredible team. Your dedication, compassion, and unwavering commitment to our mission make everything we achieve possible. To our Board of Directors, your steadfast guidance and support have been invaluable, particularly in navigating this complex year.

To our volunteers, your countless hours of service are the heart of what we do. A special thank-you goes to the Re/Max volunteers, whose remarkable efforts helped prepare 2,171 meals for seniors—an incredible testament to the power of community. To our partners and funders, thank you for believing in our mission and enabling us to make a difference.

As we close 2024, I remain hopeful and committed to continuing our mission of serving seniors and strengthening our community.

With heartfelt gratitude,

*Luana Bussieres*  
Executive Director

## Strategic Objectives

- 1** Enhance the level of knowledge and awareness of older adult needs and strengthen the commitment to building a community that is inclusive and supportive of older adults.
- 2** Foster relationships and build the knowledge, skills, and experience of individuals and agencies to strengthen the community's overall capacity to support older adults.
- 3** Develop, deliver and evaluate inclusive programs that help older adults age in the community with dignity, respect and a high quality of life.



## 2024 St. Aidan's Society Staff

**Luana Bussieres**  
Executive Director

**Sandy Grandison**  
Community Projects  
Facilitator

**Pam Burns**  
Community  
Development  
Strategist

**Kimberley MacDougall**  
Seniors Outreach  
Worker

**Donya Salari**  
Seniors Outreach  
Worker

**Carla Cooper**  
Seniors Volunteer  
Coordinator

**Lisa Stewart**  
Link Worker

**Lisa Doornbos**  
Link Worker

**Chido Sandati**  
Age Well At  
Home Worker

**Wanda Gillingham**  
Age Well At  
Home Worker



# Message from the Board Chair

Greetings,

As Chair of the Board at St. Aidan's Society, I want to share my heartfelt gratitude and admiration as we reflect on last year. 2024 brought both incredible achievements and profound challenges, and through it all, the strength and dedication of our team shone brightly!

As Luana shares in her message, this year has been deeply personal for her, marked by loss and resilience. On behalf of the Board, I want to acknowledge the unwavering support and care shown by the entire team during this time. It is a testament to the extraordinary culture of compassion at St. Aidan's—a culture that extends not just to the seniors we serve but also to one another.

It has often been said that "it takes a village" and St. Aidan's Society exemplifies this beautifully. Community truly does make community—through partnerships, acts of kindness, and the collective belief that together we can build a brighter, more inclusive future for seniors.

To Luana and the team—thank you for your passion, resilience, and commitment to our shared purpose. To our volunteers, partners, and supporters, your contributions fuel this work and remind us of the power of community. Together, we are making a difference that truly matters!

With gratitude,

*Jay Bueckert*  
Chair of the Board

## 2024 Board of Directors

**Jayson Bueckert**  
Board Chair

**Philip Kilpatrick**  
Treasurer

**Lindsey Thibeau**  
Secretary

**Tim Byron**  
Director

**Harvey Tulk**  
Director

**Tara Stephenson**  
Director

## Thank You

To our Core Funders in 2024



Funded by the  
Government of Canada's  
Age Well at Home Initiative



## Financials

Please refer to Appendix A

# Our Impact in 2024

## The Big Picture

**748** Unique Seniors Served (2570 total)

**325** Volunteers

**3207** Volunteer Hours



## Outreach & Advocate Programs

Outreach is a core service of St. Aidan's Society. Professional assessments are completed and support plans developed to ensure seniors have the services and support they require to meet their unique needs. Seniors are continuously supported through a case management model so they experience improved quality of life.



### Outreach Program

**736** Case Management Meetings with Seniors

**1414** Case Management Phone Calls

**308** Consults

**824** Brokered Referrals

**941** Supported Referrals

**83%** Of seniors surveyed report improved capacity to meet their needs as a result of the Outreach Program

**88%** Of seniors surveyed reported having someone they could rely on as a result of the Outreach Program





## Link Program

The Link Program has become the primary gateway for accessing St. Aidan's services, streamlining service delivery and simplifying

the process for seniors to receive the support they need. Our Link Workers use a holistic, wrap-around approach to ensure older adults are fully connected to essential community resources. They also help seniors access in-home support services, enabling them to age safely and comfortably at home.

For more longer term needs, referrals are made to our Outreach Team for additional support. Financial security has emerged as a significant concern affecting senior well-being, and the Link Workers have responded by developing a dedicated initiative to provide financial education and awareness. This program includes outreach to rural and Indigenous communities, where workshops are offered to empower seniors with tools and knowledge to improve their financial stability and support provided to ensure financial supports are accessed.

### Link Program

**323** Unique Seniors Served

**87%** Of seniors surveyed report improved optimism as a result of Link Worker services.

**83%** Of seniors surveyed report an improved capacity to meet needs as a result of Link Worker services.



## Financial Security

Financial security is a key to healthy aging and contentment in older adult life. Ensuring older adults have access to the spectrum of support available to help meet their needs around health care, personal safety and security, housing, food, clothing and mental health care is critical. Our team provides presentations to older adults throughout the Region to arm them with this knowledge and connect them to the support required.



### Financial Security Education

**5** Workshops Held  
3 Urban & 2 Rural

**48** Urban Seniors Served  
5 Urban Workers Trained

**36** Rural Elders Served  
8 Rural Workers Trained

# Volunteer Program

Our Volunteer Program is dedicated to fostering meaningful connections between community volunteers and seniors, helping to reduce isolation and loneliness while enhancing quality of life. Through this program, we match compassionate volunteers with older adults in need of support, creating relationships that bring companionship, joy, and a sense of belonging.

Volunteers play a vital role in helping seniors stay connected to their community by providing assistance with essential tasks such as shopping, attending medical appointments, and navigating everyday challenges. Beyond practical support, the program emphasizes building social connections, offering seniors opportunities for engagement, conversation, and shared activities that enrich their lives.



**Senior Volunteer Program Match:  
Amanda & Miriam**

*Together since June 2022*



*Being a part of St. Aidan's has changed me in ways I could never have imagined. It has deepened my empathy and expanded my heart, bringing me unimaginable joy. Being of service has taught me that the greatest fulfillment comes from giving, not receiving. I truly believe that we should all strive to be of service to others, to extend our hands and hearts, and to focus on what we can give rather than what we can take. It is in serving others that we find purpose, connection, and love!*

*I have learned so much about myself and have deepened my connection with Miriam. A lady who I didn't know at the time would impact me in so many ways. Learning about her and sharing memories with her, will be something that I will be endlessly grateful for!*

*Amanda Nadon*





By bridging the gap between seniors and their community, our Volunteer Program not only helps older adults maintain independence but also empowers them to feel valued and supported. Volunteers are the heart of this initiative, making a lasting impact through their time, dedication, and kindness. Together, we are creating a stronger, more connected community for everyone.



## Volunteer Program

37

Volunteer & Senior Matches

201

Home Visits

144

Community Outings

308

Phone Calls

1840

Volunteer Hours

81%

Of seniors reported improved social engagement as a result of their volunteer match

97%

Of seniors report an improved quality of social relationships as a result of their volunteer match.

100%

Of volunteers report an improved understanding of the social needs of seniors.

# Age Well At Home

The Age Well At Home Program is a vital initiative designed to provide practical support to seniors, enabling them to maintain their independence and age comfortably in their own homes. By addressing everyday challenges, this program empowers seniors to lead healthy, safe, and independent lives while reducing the need for hospital or emergent care visits.

The program's primary goal is to help seniors age in place, allowing them to remain in their homes and communities for as long as possible. Aging in place not only enhances quality of life but also helps seniors preserve their autonomy. By offering practical, non-medical assistance, the Age Well At Home Program prevents common challenges from becoming obstacles that could force seniors to leave their homes prematurely.



## Meal Preparation Program

*We are really grateful for our partnership with RE/MAX Fort McMurray - with their help, and the use of the Wood Buffalo Food Bank's kitchen, we are able to provide healthy, balanced meals for seniors in our Age Well at Home program. RE/MAX was instrumental in assisting us in preparing 2171 meals for older adults and contributed 352 volunteer hours to this effort.*

### Age Well At Home

**107** Unique Seniors Served

**1569** In-Home Services Delivered

**475** Light Housekeeping Tasks

**139** Laundry Assistance Services

**399** Meal Preparation Supports

**1321** Intervention Supports Provided

Meal Program in partnership with:

**RE/MAX**<sup>®</sup>



Beyond in-home support, the AWAH team addressed critical quality-of-life concerns through targeted interventions. These interventions focused on areas such as addictions and mental health, physical health, isolation and loneliness, and elder abuse.



# Advocacy Through Action

Finding impactful and effective ways of creating systems change is a foundation of our advocacy efforts and the core of social justice work. As the needs of seniors transcend sector boundaries between health systems, housing systems, community services and all levels of government, it is important that our team is engaged on multiple levels and provides opportunities for increased education and awareness. The team at St. Aidan's Society represents seniors and our agency on multiple committees and boards and leverages this involvement to influence change for those we serve.



## Social Prescribing Pathway Education & Awareness

**85** Professionals Served

## Education & Awareness Sessions Community Capacity Building Initiatives

Participants of our Age Sensitivity Training gain an understanding and empathy for older adults and their experiences with aging. This interactive training is tailored for individual organizations.

St. Aidan's works to improve community efforts and responsiveness to senior inclusion. Through specialized trainings and workshops, and the facilitation of campaigns and events, the community gains an increased understanding of the unique needs of seniors. Community understanding and ability to respond to issues impacting senior safety and security are also enhanced. This results in an improved quality of life for our region's older adults.



## Education & Awareness

**168** Participants Served

**9** Education & Awareness Sessions Hosted

**100%** Of respondents reported increased empathy towards the older adult population

**100%** Of respondents reported increased understanding of age related issues



## World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

WEAAD is marked each year on June 15th. It is an internationally recognized day intended to raise awareness of elder abuse and the neglect of older persons. In 2024, we joined the Community Safety Day event with an aim of reaching an increased number of community members. The community plays an integral role in reporting and prevention of elder abuse and having a larger community reach is optimal. St. Aidan's Society will again join Community Safety Day in 2025 and hope to reach even more of the community at large.



### WEAAD

- 151 Community Attendees
- 25 Seniors

## The Tomorrow Project

The Tomorrow Project is a collective impact initiative that unites key senior subsector service providers to address the diverse and complex needs of seniors. This collaborative effort focuses on identifying gaps in current support systems while recognizing where needs are being met. Driven by an understanding of the social determinants of health, which account for 75% of health outcomes, the project is committed to reducing duplication and ensuring cost-effective service delivery. It aims to streamline access to services for seniors across the social profit sector, making it easier for them to connect with the supports they need. The project takes a culturally appropriate, sensitive, and respectful approach, acknowledging the unique backgrounds and needs of seniors. By assessing the capacity of participating organizations, the initiative seeks to develop a comprehensive plan that empowers seniors, enhances their quality of life, and fosters a thriving, inclusive community. The Tomorrow Project emphasizes collaboration, leveraging the strengths of each organization while respecting their capacity, to create a sustainable and efficient network of support that addresses the full spectrum of seniors' needs.



Senior Collecitive Partners:



# Senior Supports Programming

## Christmas Support Packages

Ensuring seniors have access to the resources and support they require during the holiday season is critical and Christmas Support Package deliveries have become an annual tradition for the team at St. Aidan's.

with volunteer support from:



### Christmas Support Packages

**429** Seniors Served

**51** Volunteers

**255** Volunteer Hours



## Senior Lawn Maintenance Project

Challenges maintaining a home has a direct correlation to loss of senior independence. Providing supports and services that allow seniors to maintain their ability to age at home improves mental and emotional wellbeing and improves quality of life.

### Senior Lawn Maintenance Project

**25** Homes  
32 Seniors Served

**59** Volunteers

**321** Volunteer Hours



with volunteer support from:



## Senior Health & Wellness

Physical well-being plays a key role in healthy aging, making it essential for older adults to stay active and maintain their health. At St. Aidan's, the team collaborates with organizations dedicated to promoting physical wellness, including the Regional Recreation Corporation, the YMCA, and Wood Buffalo Sport Connection.

In 2024, older adults were introduced to disc golf during the Seniors Week Tailgate Tuesday event. Despite inclement weather, enthusiasm and participation remained high. Building on this momentum, a new initiative in 2025, in partnership with Wood Buffalo Sport Connection, will offer older adults the chance to explore a variety of physical activities.

Staying active can delay functional decline and help prevent the onset of chronic diseases. By fostering opportunities for physical activity, St. Aidan's remains committed to supporting older adults in maintaining their independence and overall well-being through meaningful partnerships and initiatives.

in partnership with:



## Health & Wellness Series

**418** Seniors Served

**24** Workshops Held

## Seniors' VIP Movie Event

Ensuring seniors are honoured and recognized is an important outcome for the team at St. Aidan's. Since 2016, St. Aidan's has hosted a VIP Movie Event where seniors are invited to be treated like royalty--escorted to their seats by a team of volunteer emergency service staff, seniors enjoy a free movie, popcorn, pop and chocolate bar. It is a favourite event for the seniors and our team loves it too!



### Seniors' VIP Movie Event

**93** Seniors Served

**8** Volunteers

**28** Volunteer Hours







## Seniors' Week

Seniors' Week, a provincially recognized initiative, is celebrated annually in June. Each year, St. Aidan's hosts an event to celebrate and honour the valuable contributions of seniors in our community and to promote their well-being.

### Tailgate Tuesday

**119** Seniors Served

in partnership with:



### Heart of Wood Buffalo Award Recipients

Recognized for **Collaboration of the Year Award**  
St. Aidan's Society, Seniors & The Art, in partnership  
with Wood Buffalo Arts Council

## Arts in Action Collaborative

St. Aidan's Society and Arts Council Wood Buffalo have shared a strong collaborative partnership over the years that has provided seniors with opportunities to explore various art forms.

### Arts in Action Collaborative

**204** Seniors Served

**11** Workshops Held

**100%** Of senior participants reported improved social engagement as a result of the workshops

**90%** Of senior participants reported improved confidence and self-esteem as a result of workshop participation



in partnership with:



**ARTS COUNCIL**  
WOOD BUFFALO

# Community Projects Portfolio

## The MAC (McMurray All Connected Community Calendar)

In 2024, a new and improved ticketing system was developed and successfully implemented, offering significant enhancements for users and greater ease of use. While other ticketing platforms raised their fees, the MAC proudly maintained the lowest rates. The year also saw record support from the social profit sector, with an increasing number of agencies supporting St. Aidan's Society by promoting their events and selling tickets through our platform. We also received notable support from the profit sector and industry. We extend our gratitude to everyone who continues to use our system and support the MAC Calendar, helping make it the go-to hub for community information and engagement.

### The MAC Calendar

- 106** Language Translations Offered
- 2494** Events Captured in 2024  
82% increase over the previous year
- 59,211** Site Visitors  
127% increase in website traffic
- 132,585** Page Views  
127% increase in views

**MAC CALENDAR** everything you need to sell your **TICKETS ONLINE**  
your trusted **LOCAL** event registration & ticketing platform

- Customize Ticket Sales**  
Set custom ticket prices, coupon codes, pre-sale prices and pass along savings to your guests with our low service fees (which stay in the community).
- Reach Larger Audiences**  
Benefit from additional marketing via our social media platforms, digital newsletter and widely-used online calendar.
- Increase Efficiency**  
Sell tickets faster and reduce check-in time with secure ticketing options (QR codes).
- Easy Management & Reporting**  
User-friendly, organizer dashboard provides full control of your event to monitor ticket sales and track attendance.
- Service You Can Trust**  
Local, one-on-one support with a real person working in partnership to help set up your event for success.

Get Started Today! Contact the MAC Calendar at [sandy@staidansociety.ca](mailto:sandy@staidansociety.ca) to start selling tickets today.

St. Aidan's Society | REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO | [maccalendar.ca](https://maccalendar.ca)

Local events can be viewed at [maccalendar.ca](https://maccalendar.ca)  
Regional representation on the MAC with specific calendar pages for each rural hamlet.

## Seniors' Directory

In the spring, St. Aidan's launched their Seniors Information Directory - a comprehensive guide to help older adults, support workers and caregivers navigate the many services available locally, provincially, and federally. To ensure the Directory was accessible to everyone, it was available in both printed hard copies as well as a online version.





We rely on the **Power of Volunteers** to support the many programs & initiatives designed to enhance the quality of life for older adults in the Wood Buffalo region.



**Day of the Older Person** was marked with an information session from Wood Buffalo Housing regarding housing options in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.



# About St. Aidan's

St. Aidan's Society is a local social profit organization that was established in 1973, with a vision of creating a positive community impact.

We are working to enhance the lives of older community members in the RMWB, through leadership in the areas of advocacy and in the delivery of services to meet the complex needs of older adults. We believe in partnerships and working in collaboration to provide quality services and support to anyone 60+ experiencing age related challenges.

**“Aging is an extraordinary process whereby you become the person you always should have been.”**

*~ David Bowie*



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1 C.A. Knight Way, Fort McMurray AB T9H 5C5

