

EPISCOPAL CHARITIES OF RHODE ISLAND

2024 - 2025

The mission of Episcopal Charities to help those in need began in 1952 and continues today. As part of the outreach arm of the Diocese, our goal is to share the love of Christ with all our neighbors by providing funds to meet needs of those in our communities. Over the past seven decades, Episcopal Charities has raised millions of dollars to support outreach through Diocesan ministries, our churches, and nonprofit agencies that partner with our churches to meet critical needs in Rhode Island.

The beginning of 2025 brought with it concern about what might happen to funding from Federal programs critical to those in need in Rhode Island. As the year has progressed, we have experienced increased costs and decreased availability of food and housing which endangers our state's most vulnerable citizens as well as those who exist paycheck to paycheck. The cost of living in Rhode Island makes it difficult if not impossible for many Rhode Islanders to make ends meet. Of the households in Rhode Island, 38% are food insecure. Many of our church feeding programs and our agency partners are experiencing a 20 percent increase in the number of clients that are asking for help.

Since 2018 when we began focusing our grants on basic human needs of food, shelter, and healthcare for at-risk children and their families as well as at-risk seniors, Episcopal Charities has increased its granting to both non-profit agencies who work with our churches and our own church-based feeding ministries that care for our neighbors in need throughout Rhode Island. Our goal is to make a difference in the lives of those who go without the 'basics' we often take for granted. **In awarding agency grants, we prioritize nonprofits that partner with our churches to meet needs in our local communities.**

We are blessed by the forethought of the founders of Episcopal Charities who established a fund to support our operations so that **100% of the money you donate each year goes directly to serve those in need.** Because of the generosity of our donors, our grants help fund food pantries and meal sites in our churches and local agencies, temporary shelters for those who have none, and free clinics and counseling agencies for those who have no other access to get help. Additionally, Episcopal Charities provides support for ministries of the diocese such as college chaplaincy, Hispanic ministry, and youth programs at our Episcopal Conference Center. **Every gift regardless of size makes this possible!**

Episcopal Charities Grants

Our **Charities Annual Fund** raises money for larger sustaining grants that support diocesan ministries and the ongoing work of agencies that partner with our churches to provide food, shelter, and healthcare to those who go without. Agencies that receive these grants go through a process including application submission in the spring, in-depth review during the summer and grant distribution at the end of the year.

We started the **Charities NOW Fund** during the pandemic to provide emergency funding to our church food pantries and meal sites and to partnering agencies needing money **NOW** to meet the immediate needs of our neighbors. So far this year, we have issued \$69,000 in **Charities NOW grants**. Our goal with these small grants is to get them out quickly so they can help with critical shortfalls. Many of the agencies awarded Annual Grants have told us how extremely helpful it is to get a **Charities NOW grant** during the year rather than having to wait for all their Annual Grant at the end of the year.

In 2025 we initiated two new programs:

The Easter Challenge: In Lent this year we held the Charities NOW Easter Challenge which enabled our churches to request up to \$1,000 to support their own feeding ministries or those of their local agency partners. Our goal was to get more money for food into our local communities. Twenty churches requested the grants which in turn provided for their neighbors in need.

Project Milk: In August we made an appeal to our donors to help St. Peter's and St. Andrew's Church in Providence provide food for 200 households a week through Pete and Andy's Pantry. Each week this small church community distributes 200 gallons of milk, 100 of which comes from the RI Community Food Bank and 100 gallons which they purchase for an expense of \$1,000 per month for milk. We are happy to report that by mid-October our donors provided \$5,000 to help buy milk for the rest of the year!

Susan Hudson Fund Grants

This fund was established by a generous bequest from a long-time supporter of Episcopal Charities. Beyond making grants through our annual fund, we use some of the income from this fund to help our churches when they need capital improvements critical to continue an ongoing outreach program. For example, this year we made a grant to the East Greenwich Interfaith Food Cupboard at St. Luke's to replace a failed refrigerator. The Food Cupboard is open three days a week and their client population regularly includes 685 at-risk children and seniors.

The 2024 Bishop Higgins Award: At Convention, Episcopal Charities awarded the Bishop Higgins Award for compassionate commitment and service to those in need in Rhode Island to **Loaves and Fishes RI**. Loaves and Fishes, an interfaith ministry of twelve churches of different denominations, deliver meals to areas where people are in deep need. Using a catering truck, Loaves and Fishes volunteers visit Woonsocket and Providence and other places in between where people need a warm meal and a friendly smile. Rain or shine they arrive bringing food, clothing, and other items for their clients, but most of all, they bring love to the 80 to 100 women, men and children awaiting them. With this award they received a grant to help them continue the work they are doing.

Episcopal Charities is supported by our Advisory Board members who give generously of their time and talents to do the work of Episcopal Charities. They are

Mr. Scott Avedisian
The Rev. Christine Cassels
Ms. Nancy Kaul
Ms. Karen Knisely

The Rt. Rev. W. Nicholas Knisely
The Rev. Noel Bailey Robinson
Ms. Susan Ursillo, Chair
Ms. Joan Collins, Staff

In Gratitude,

Betsy Fornal
Director, Episcopal Charities

2024 EPISCOPAL CHARITIES GRANTS

Church-Sponsored Annual Grants – Nonprofit agencies that partner with our churches to provide basic human needs - food, shelter, healthcare - for our neighbors in need. Those with an (*) have received grants from both Charities Annual and Charities NOW.

AGENCY

Aquidneck Food Pantry, Portsmouth*
Beautiful Day, Providence
Better Lives Rhode Island, Providence*
Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center, Newport*
Dorcas International Institute, Providence*
East Bay Food Pantry, Bristol*
East Greenwich Interfaith Food Cupboard*
Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center, Warwick
Friends Way, Warwick
Furniture Connection, East Greenwich
Hope Clinic/Clinica Esperanza, Providence
Interfaith Counseling Center, Providence
Jonnycake Center for Hope, Peace Dale*
Jonnycake Center of Westerly*
Little Compton Community Center, Senior Program*
Little Compton Food Bank*
Loaves and Fishes Rhode Island*
New Urban Arts, Providence
North Kingstown Food Pantry*
Rhode Island Community Food Bank
Rhode Island Free Clinic, Providence
Southern Rhode Island Volunteers, Charlestown
St. Mary's Home for Children
The Sharing Locker, East Greenwich*
Westerly Area Rest Meals WARM Center

SPONSORING CHURCH

St. Columba's. Middletown
Diocese of Rhode Island
Grace Church, Providence
St. Mary's, Portsmouth
Grace Church, Providence
St. Michael's, Bristol
St. Luke's, East Greenwich
St. Mark's, Warwick
St. Mark's, Warwick
St. Luke's, East Greenwich
St. Martin's, Providence
St. Luke's, East Greenwich
St. Augustine's, Kingston
Christ Church, Westerly
St. Andrew's, Little Compton
St. Andrew's, Little Compton
Emmanuel Church, Cumberland
All Saints' Memorial, Providence
St. Paul's, Wickford
St. James, Woonsocket
Grace Church, Providence
St. Augustine's, Kingston
Christ Church, Lincoln
St. Luke's, East Greenwich
Christ Church, Westerly

Charities NOW Grants – for Community Agencies feeding programs (not receiving annual grants)

AGENCY

Big Brothers/Big Sisters
City Meal Site
Cranston WEZ Farmers' Market
Epiphany Soup Kitchen
House of Hope for Echo Village
New Beginnings
Rhode Island College Food Pantry
Rhode Island for Community Justice
Seamen's Church Institute, Newport

RECOMMENDING CHURCH or CLERGY

Holy Spirit, Charlestown
All Saints' Memorial, Providence
Archdeacon Grace Swinski
St. Stephen's, Providence
Episcopal Charities Board
St. James, Woonsocket
The Rev. Savannah Ponder, Campus Minister
Diocesan Staff
The Rt. Rev. W. Nicholas Knisely

Charities NOW Grants – Churches Receiving Grants to support their Feeding Ministries

Church Beyond the Walls, Providence
St. Peter & St. Andrew's Church, Providence

St. Mark's Church, Warwick
St. Thomas Church, Greenville

Diocesan Sponsored Programs

Bishop's Discretionary Fund
City Camp - ECC outreach program
Hispanic Ministry – St. George's Church

Campus Ministry at URI/St. Augustine's Church
Episcopal Conference Center Youth Programs