



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
CONCORD

First Pres Provides Assistance to Community Partners

For many years, First Presbyterian Church Concord has developed partnerships with many worthy organizations that are focused on improving the quality of life of the underserved of our community. Gifts to these groups are included in the benevolences within our annual budget. Others are given by the Presbyterian Women and the Diaconate from the distributions received by them from the Dunford Fund. The projects of support below feature several of these 2021 community partners with whom we have shared our time and our gifts.

Operation Sandwich Provides Opportunity House 720 Meals!



Operation Sandwich is a monthly ministry coordinated by the Diaconate serving Opportunity House (OH) which provides meals, clothing, restrooms, washing machines and dryers, and other service for those considered to be homeless at their location on Corban Avenue in Concord. OH serves approximately 60 people each day.

FPC has committed to providing 60 sandwich "meals" for the guests of OH the last Friday of each month. In 2021, individual congregation members, the Senior High Youth Group, and VBS participants provided over 720 meals to our neighbors in need. A sandwich "meal" currently consists of a sub or regular sandwich with deli meat and cheese, a soft granola or cereal bar, fruit, dessert, and a bottle of water.

How Can You Help OH in 2022?

Fritze Batts, Diaconate liaison of this program, said, "This is a great ministry that anyone of any age can participate in! Sign-ups are sent out monthly via email and are divided into groups of 6 sandwich meals each, with 10 total slots available. The cost of the meals is underwritten by those preparing the meals which can be assembled in the comfort and safety of your own home." Completed meals are dropped off in the Fellowship House kitchen by end of business day the Thursday before delivery. Accommodations for at home pickup can be made if needed. Diaconate volunteers will then deliver the meals to OH by 10 am Friday morning. Opportunity House handles the set up and dispersal of all food.

If you would like to be added to the email list, or if you are a member of group interested in signing up for a particular month as a fun service project, please contact Fritze at fritzeleigh@gmail.com.

2021 Support of CCM

First Presbyterian Church was one of the founding churches of Cooperative Christian Ministry. The following highlights illustrate how FPC continued to provide a broad range of support throughout 2021.



CROP Walk

In 2021, our church once again organized a team for the Cabarrus County CROP Hunger Walk. This event benefits the Cooperative Christian Ministry locally and Church World Service, a faith-based organization transforming communities around the globe through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement and disaster.

After a completely "virtual" walk in 2020, 2021's event took place October 10, 2021. It represented a partial return to normal as participants could choose whether to join the larger group for a walk through Concord's historic district or to walk on their own around their neighborhoods.

Tripp Carpenter and Edie Johnston Deacon liaisons stated, "Our church raised \$485 in support of 2021's event and the Diaconate purchased a \$500 Silver Sponsorship from the Dunford Fund. We are hopeful more of us will be able to participate in person in 2022!"

Bills by Breeggemann Fund

A request was made by the Bills by Breeggemann Fund at CCM to assist CCM social workers in covering the cost of any needs of their financial assistance clients, such as rent, utility, gas, or medical bills. The Diaconate gifted \$1,000 from their Discretionary Fund made possible by the Dunford Fund.



Deacons Jenny Chikes (L) and Don Seitz (R) present \$1000 to Abby Breeggemann

Food Drives

Throughout the year, FPC provides food to CCM. One significant food drive appeal was from the families of First Kids in February 2021. CCM received 250 items and 500 items were contributed to the Blessing Box program.

Diaconate Quarterly Donations

The Diaconate provides annual support to CCM through quarterly donations from the Benevolence Fund. A total of \$11,000 was donated in 2021.

Food Inventory Yields Donations to CCM

Don Seitz, Diaconate moderator, and his wife Christine inventoried the expiration dates of all canned goods in our food pantry which are distributed to the Back Pack program and Blessing Box. They found 50 pounds of canned food items that were within six months of the expiration date. Kathy Pilkington volunteered to transport these to CCM.

Angel Tree Gifts Touch Lives

The 2021 Angel Tree project successfully brought the spirit of Christ to 60 children in 35 homes. Linda Barnett coordinated the project for the Diaconate and noted, "This project is very satisfying for everyone



involved all respects, especially after ringing a doorbell to hear the joyful sound of a child announce 'they're here!' or to see the delight on the face of a teenager as you hand her the gift from her absent parent."

Each Christmas prison chaplains contact prisoners to offer them the opportunity to participate in this program which provides a wrapped Christmas gift to their child/children and includes a message from that parent. These gifts are delivered by members of FPC's volunteer teams who have made calls to each child's at-home "care giver" for approval and gift ideas. Angel Tree tags for each child noting their gift preferences are then hung on a Christmas tree in the sanctuary narthex for FPC members to choose a child. They purchase a gift, wrap and return those gifts to church where volunteers sort these gifts into family groups ready for delivery.

A portion of letter to FPC from an inmate stated, "I would like to thank you with all of my heart for your gift to my son Patrick. It meant so much to my son and myself. What you do with Angel Tree really does make a difference in the lives that you help. When I get out in a few years, I will be connecting with Angel Tree at a local church and donating as a way to give back to such a beautiful fellowship. God bless you all and again thank you! Merry Christmas! Patrick, Sr.

Habitat Campaign Nets \$17,000

During 2021, the Covid pandemic continued to create financial challenges for Habitat for Humanity. Examples included the loss of \$60,000 due to the cancellation of both a special event and the Collegiate Challenge Build by visiting college students who we normally feed and house during their stay in Concord. In addition, \$200,000 was budgeted for 45 home repairs such as wheelchair ramps and roofs. The immense need for home repairs during 2021 rose from 45 to 96 repairs. This cost \$400,000 requiring Habitat to use funds from their reserves to make this happen.



The FPC 2021 Habitat for Humanity campaign ended with a resounding gift of \$17,000! Our church family contributed \$12,000 responding enthusiastically to the Diaconate's \$5000 challenge gift from the Dunford Fund to create the \$17,000 gift.

Chris Hahn, Diaconate coordinator of this year's campaign said, "I would like to thank our awesome congregation for all of your generous donations. Habitat for Humanity is greatly appreciative for First Presbyterian Church's support. COVID-19 has had an effect on their organization and our donations helped tremendously. We look forward to working with them again next year."

Bill Shelton, CEO of Habitat for Humanity Cabarrus, noted, "During a time when the world seems it is under constant grey clouds, GOD sends Habitat Cabarrus County sunshine and hope by way of First Presbyterian Church of Concord. The large and generous gift will help Habitat Cabarrus County give families in need joy and hope through homeownership."

Diaconate Dunford Discretionary Funds Distributed

The Diaconate Discretionary Fund is created from the annual distributions from the Dunford Fund, one half of which is managed by the Presbyterian Women and one half by the Diaconate. In 2021, the Deacons used funds from the Dunford Fund to support the following 14 grant requests and purchase supplies for the Blessing Box which totalled \$21,800.



Diaconate Discretionary Fund 2021 Grants

Cabarrus County Education Foundation
\$500 SPARCS Initiative

Cabarrus County CROP Walk
\$500 for Silver Sponsorship

Academic Learning Center
\$2,000 for operational expenses

Racial Equity Cabarrus
\$1,000 for general expenses including workshops

FPC Habitat Campaign
\$5,000 matching gift

City of Concord Rider Transit
\$500 to purchase 500 bus tickets for clients of Opportunity House

Cub Scouts Pack 3
\$1,000 for general expenses

Second Course Culinary & Life Skills Center
\$500 for operational expenses

Cabarrus Cooperative Ministry
\$1,000 for expenses related to food and housing needs

Boy Scout Troop 3
\$500 for general expenses

Salvation Army
\$2,000 for Picture of Hope Campaign for new night shelter

Blessing Box Supplies
\$1,300 for food and basic toiletry items

Irvin Elementary School Back Packs
\$1,000 for new pack packs

Jr. Charity League
\$1,500 for clothes for children

Opportunity House
\$716 for general expenses