

THE COOPERATIVE MINISTRY

Our Mission

To increase the economic self-sufficiency of people experiencing poverty in the Midlands through crisis assistance and sustainability programs.

2023-2024 Annual Report

TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

From the Chief Executive Officer

Beth H. Irick

Community support blessed the Cooperative Ministry clients and staff during FY 2023-2024.

We were the beneficiaries of two community-wide golf tournaments. The first was sponsored by Tucker Oil and Corner Pantry, and the second by Applegreen Corporation. The combined donations from both tournaments impacted 117 households with rent and utility assistance while heads of household met with Financial Health Coaches and worked toward self-sufficiency.

An endowment grant from Forest Lake Presbyterian Church allowed us to purchase a storage shed to house furniture donations. This gift created more space within our actual clothing bank “store setting.”

Through LoveCola, we were involved with our community’s Convoy of Hope, which reached hundreds of people with benevolent services and free products.

We sponsored our second Faith & Poverty Conference. These periodic events bring the faith community together to learn more about poverty in our community.

It was a great year for partnerships, and we are very grateful.



2023-2024 Board of Directors

OFFICERS (July 2023-June 2024)

Davis Buchanan, chair

Buchanan Construction Services

Stephanie Yandle, vice chair

BlueCross BlueShield of SC

Alexa Godwin, secretary

AgFirst

Steven Hicks, CPA, treasurer

AgFirst

DIRECTORS (July 2023-June 2024)

Elise Bidwell, CFP

Edward Jones

Rev. Wes Church

First Baptist Church, Columbia

Bill Edmonds

Northstar Leadership Solutions

Mike Farmer

TD Bank

Carol Fowler

Fowler Communications, Inc.

David Hodges

Mass Mutual Financial Group

Chief Wm. “Skip” Holbrook

Columbia Police Department

Jim Hudson

Jim Hudson Automotive Group

Rob Motley

IOA

Milton Pope

Parker Poe Consulting, LLC

Mark Scriven, CPA

Elliott Davis, LLC

Rev. Derek Thomas

First Presbyterian Church

David Tucker

Tucker Oil Company

Mitch Watson, CPA

Carolinas HUB International

Robert Williams III

Lizard’s Thicket

Kyle Whetstone

Palmetto State Glass

2023-2024 Congregational Advisory Committee

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

First Baptist Church*

First Presbyterian Church*

Forest Lake Presbyterian Church

Gateway Baptist Church

Main Street United Methodist Church*

NewSpring Church

Sandhills Community Church

Shandon United Methodist Church

Shandon Presbyterian Church

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral*

Washington Street United Methodist Church*

* These are the founding churches of The Cooperative Ministry.

The Cooperative Ministry was created in 1982 by five downtown Columbia churches - First Presbyterian Church, First Baptist Church, Washington Street United Methodist Church, Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, and Main Street United Methodist Church. In 2001, a Congregational Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from church partners, was organized. The first meeting was at Eastminster Presbyterian Church. This special committee convenes twice each year to receive program updates from staff, and to offer valuable counsel on The Cooperative Ministry’s programs and projects.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Cooperative Ministry served 12,957 people with eight unique services in the fiscal year that ended on June 30, 2024.

Services



The Cooperative Ministry serves its clients with a variety of Financial Empowerment and Assistance services aimed at helping people become self-sufficient. Services include **Financial Empowerment coaching**, which also may include **Financial Assistance** for rent, mortgage or utilities; **Career Improvement**, which helps qualifying clients earn a GED, license, certification, or an expungement needed for a better job; **Free Clothing** from our 3,200 square foot “store setting” that clients need for work or school; **Free Furniture**, which often benefits those

experiencing a complete loss due to fire; **Free Income Tax Preparation** through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program; **Free Food** through emergency food boxes for families or snack packs for individuals, and **Insurance Assistance**, which comes as free help understanding the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid, and Medicare. Services within this “toolbox” may be used separately or together to help people reach their goals of stability and sustainability, which often goes a long way toward providing confidence in tomorrow.

2023-2024 Service Numbers

Food Pantry, Voucher, Snack Pack	1,499 People
Utility Payments.....	283 Households
Rent / Mortgage Payments.....	135 Households
Household Furnishings & Supplies	24 Households
Free Clothing	6,887 People*
Tax Preparation (VITA Program)	7,480 Returns
Career Improvement Assistance	116 Individuals
Financial Empowerment	305 Individuals
Health Insurance Premium Assistance	693 People

* In addition to serving 6,887 people in FY 2023-2024, The Cooperative Ministry’s clothing bank also provided clothing to the following non-profits and government agencies: University of South Carolina Supportive Housing, Sober Living Transitional Housing, Lexington Richland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Center (LRADAC), Lexington and Columbia Mental Health, Richland One and Richland Two school districts, Restoring Promise, and Transitions.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY (JUNE 30, 2024, AUDITED BY THE HOBBS GROUP)

Revenues & Expenses—FY 2023-2024

REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT	
Contributions	
Individuals	\$230,957
Congregations	\$172,893
Foundations	\$175,075
Bequests	0
Businesses	\$95,440
Grants	\$4,172,861
Car Program	\$46,755
United Way, Fundraising, & Miscellaneous	\$109,357
TOTAL REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT	\$5,003,338
EXPENSES	
Program Services	
Crisis Assistance	\$3,807,743
Client Engagement	\$494,145
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	\$4,301,888
Supporting Services	
Management and General	\$547,705
Fundraising	\$159,855
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES	\$707,560
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$5,009,448
OTHER INCOME (EXPENSES)	
Rental Income	\$27,865
Gain on sale of property and equipment	-
Total Other Income (Expense)	\$27,865
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(\$21,755)
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$3,718,749
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$3,740,504

Value of In-kind Donations

Community volunteers and college interns contributed 13,644 hours of service, which was valued at \$267,150*. The value of volunteer time is excluded from total revenue. We are nevertheless grateful for their vital support.

* Source: Volunteer time with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program is valued at \$12 / hour by the Internal Revenue Service. The 2020 national value of volunteer time is \$28.54 / hour per the website independentsector.org.



VITA volunteer John Baynes assists clients with free tax preparation.

Who are our clients?

Clients of The Cooperative Ministry are housekeepers, retail cashiers and assistant managers, laborers and warehouse workers, nursing and medical assistants, food service employees, state government employees, and customer service representatives.

Most of our client households are headed by a woman, who is caring for two others in the household.

89 percent of expenses go to support program services.

**THE
COOPERATIVE
MINISTRY**

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