



**Serving the Local Community for over 50 years**

**#8305**

**#72413**

**FAIRFAX FISH, INC.**

**(FOR IMMEDIATE SYMPATHETIC HELP)**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**APRIL 1, 2022 - MARCH 31, 2023**

# **FAIRFAX FISH**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

### **APRIL 1, 2022 - MARCH 31, 2023**

For Immediate Sympathetic Help (FISH) is a volunteer, ecumenical outreach community-based organization founded over 50 years ago. For the Fiscal Year ending March 31, 2023, Fairfax FISH was comprised of 14 churches located in the vicinity of Fairfax City, Virginia. The following is a list of the FY 2022-2023 participating churches:

Christ Evangelical Lutheran	Holy Spirit Catholic
Expectation Church	Little River United Church of Christ
Fairfax Baptist	Lord of Life Lutheran
Fairfax Church	Providence Presbyterian
Fairfax Presbyterian	St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic
Fairfax United Methodist	St. Peter's In The Woods Episcopal
Good Shepherd Episcopal	St. Stephen's United Methodist

#### ***FISH serves the needy of Fairfax***

FISH provides funds and volunteers to serve the needy and elderly in the greater Fairfax City area of Fairfax County. FISH responds to requests for life's necessities: food, clothing, and financial assistance for delinquent rent, mortgage, utility bills and prescriptions. Requests for assistance are passed on to us by the Office of Coordinated Services Planning (CSP) which is part of the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services. CSP social workers screen clients to verify information and to determine whether they qualify for assistance by FISH and other community based organizations. CSP can be reached at (703)-222-0880.

Financial assistance from FISH is limited to once per year (occasional exceptions are granted). Food, gasoline, and prescription requests may be filled more frequently according to need. The FISH governing council sets a monetary limit for each category; these limits are reviewed monthly by the Council and can be adjusted as necessary. For clients whose need is greater than FISH limits can satisfy, CSP is usually able to put together a "package" of funds donated by several different groups along with FISH to fulfill a rent or utility request. Payments are made by the FISH Treasurer to landlords and utility providers, not directly to clients.

#### ***COVID-19 Pandemic Response***

This fiscal year, FISH volunteers were intensely involved with helping our community during the pandemic. While the special emergency pandemic response (CARES Act and Emergency Rental Assistance) programs ended, the pandemic continued to affect the community. For our Fiscal Year ending March 31, 2023, FISH was able to financially help 456 households consisting of 1,153 adults and children through our "normal" funding stream and remaining residual funds in the special ERA-2 pandemic response program.

### ***Funding for FISH***

FISH is an all volunteer organization that receives financial support through its member churches, individual and corporate donors, and donations through the United Way and the Combined Federal Campaign. Since July 2018, we have applied for and received grant funds through the Fairfax County Consolidated Community Funding Pool (CCFP.) This year our CCFP grant amount was increased thanks to the county's confidence in FISH volunteers. FISH's "overhead" expenses are very low— this year, 95% of donations went directly to help those in need in the community. The FISH Council feels that an external audit is an important tool for responsible financial control, and thus undergoes a formal audit *every* year. The audit cost is the most significant part of the organization's few overhead expenses.

### ***Food Ministry***

FISH delivers food to families referred to us by CSP, almost always on the same day. Dedicated FISH volunteer drivers obtain staple items from the food pantries maintained by several of our member churches and supplement them with perishables (milk, eggs, produce, etc) from supermarkets, as well as with diapers and/or baby formula. Each delivery is tailored to the particular needs of the client. This fiscal year, FISH completed 111 deliveries in the area, ranging from single recipients to large families.

### ***Clothing Ministry***

For over 45 years, FISH has operated a Clothing Closet, staffed by dedicated volunteers, in space provided by Fairfax Presbyterian Church. Although some controls are in place, a CSP referral is not required to visit and use the Clothing Closet. This year, 272 adults and 55 children visited the Clothing Closet. In addition, the closet assisted several churches' "Grace Ministries" events and with clothing for homeless participants in church-run hypothermia shelter programs. We estimate that we helped 250 families per month through these various programs. The Clothing Closet is blessed with generous donations of gently used clothing by individuals, local businesses, and organizations, including three coat drives of 140 winter coats, three "mitten tree" donations of hats, scarves and gloves, and 50 huge bags of clothing from Christ Lutheran Church's clothing drive.

### ***Other Assistance***

Fairfax FISH continued to fund a gasoline ministry in Fairfax County, in cooperation with area service stations. This year nine clients were assisted with emergency gas "fill-ups" which enabled them to get to their places of employment and to access sources of vital community services. We also assisted two persons to meet emergency prescription needs.

### ***FISH's Impact***

Because of its charter, governing policies, and philosophy, FISH serves those who are helping themselves and struggling to overcome temporary impediments to stability and self sufficiency. A FISH client may be someone who has finally started a new job but doesn't have enough gasoline to make it to work until the first payday. Or working mothers and fathers facing the distressing choice between paying the electric bill or providing adequate food for their families until the food stamps kick in. Because of FISH's short-term immediate relationships with clients, it is often difficult to measure long term results. We can see the immediate success of our assistance: the client avoids eviction; the utilities are not shut off; the family has enough food; the pharmacy could fill the critical prescription. And occasionally we get insights in the form of thank you calls and letters from clients and their families expressing heartfelt appreciation for FISH's help with their rent or their utilities in a time of critical need.

There is a synergy at work also: if FISH helps, others are also ready to help. For example, landlords may be more willing to work with a tenant on a back rent payment plan if they see that FISH has assisted. Because of our close relationship with Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services, we are confident that FISH is reaching the most needy members of our community, and that our assistance helps leverage a much broader community effort. The continuing fight against the economic and social effects of the pandemic has exponentially increased the impact of Fairfax FISH on the community.

### ***FISH Volunteers***

Special appreciation goes out to the 84 FISH volunteers for their dedication and faithfulness to the program in difficult conditions of the pandemic. This year FISH volunteers dedicated nearly 6,800 hours and drove 4,611 miles serving members of our community.

### ***The FISH Council***

Fairfax FISH is governed by a Council composed of one representative from each member church. The Council's elected officers for 2022-2023 were: Larry Velte, Chair; Malcolm (Mac) Mercer, Vice Chair; Faye Quesenberry, Vice Chair; Valerie Bates, Treasurer; and Patti Mueller, Secretary.

### ***How to reach Fairfax FISH***

Fairfax FISH does not have a central office. We have an answering service at (703)-978-0280 which is checked by a Council member daily. Our website is [www.fairfaxfish.org](http://www.fairfaxfish.org). Fairfax FISH can be contacted via email at [fairfaxfish@yahoo.com](mailto:fairfaxfish@yahoo.com). Our mailing address is P.O. Box 2254, Fairfax, VA 22031-2254.

### ***FISH Financials***

The attached tables, extracted from our latest audit, reflect FISH's income, the financial support provided to clients, and our operating expenses.

### ***FISH will continue to serve the community***

Fairfax FISH will continue to strive to meet the challenges of assisting those in need in our community. As our fiscal year closed the social and economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect our community, FISH is poised and ready to serve as a direct and responsive conduit for mortgage, rental, and utility assistance. We are proud of our organization, its caring and dedicated volunteers, and our many loyal supporters throughout the community. It is indeed a blessing to be a part of an organization that for over 50 years has been making a real difference in our area.



Lawrence R. Velte  
Council Chair  
August 14, 2023

## STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

For the Years Ended March 31,

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
<b>Contributions and Grants</b>	\$ 156,669	\$ 2,515,147 *
<b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Program Expenses</b>	171,633	2,520,344
<b>Management and General</b>	11,495	10,640
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<u>183,128</u>	<u>2,530,984</u>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	44,638	(15,837)
<b>Net Assets at Beginning of Year</b>	78,051	93,888
<b>Net Assets at End of Year</b>	\$ 122,689	\$ 78,051

Notes: \* Includes \$2,363,407 grants under the COVID-19 ERA and ERA-2 Programs.

The latest Audit available covers April 2022 to March 2023.

## STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

For the Years Ended March 31,

	<u>2023</u>		
	Management		
	<u>Program</u>	<u>&amp; General</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>Housing</b>	\$ 117,816	\$ -	\$ 117,816
<b>Utilities</b>	42,495	-	42,495
<b>Groceries and other</b>	10,603	-	10,603
<b>Medical and dental</b>	400	-	400
<b>Gasoline</b>	319	-	319
<b>Insurance</b>	-	1,914	1,914
<b>Professional fees</b>	-	5,500	5,500
<b>Office supplies</b>	-	1,228	1,228
<b>Telephone</b>	-	1,047	1,047
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	-	1,477	1,477
<b>Bank Charges</b>	-	329	329
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$ 171,633</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 11,495</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 183,128</u></b>

	<u>2022</u>		
	Management		
	<u>Program</u>	<u>&amp; General</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>Housing</b>	\$ 2,472,391	\$ -	\$ 2,472,391
<b>Utilities</b>	37,437	-	37,437
<b>Groceries and other</b>	9,779	-	9,779
<b>Medical and dental</b>	250	-	250
<b>Gasoline</b>	487	-	487
<b>Insurance</b>	-	1,794	1,794
<b>Professional fees</b>	-	4,550	4,550
<b>Office supplies</b>	-	1,492	1,492
<b>Telephone</b>	-	889	889
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	-	1,615	1,615
<b>Bank Charges</b>	-	300	300
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$ 2,520,344</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 10,640</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 2,530,984</u></b>