

ASSISTANCE CENTER OF TOWSON CHURCHES

2024

ANNUAL REPORT



ACTC

116 W. PENNSYLVANIA AVE. TOWSON, MD 21204

ACTCSERVES.ORG

410-296-4855

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear ACTC Family and Friends,

What a whirlwind this year has been! The numbers speak for themselves—our member congregations, united through the Assistance Center of Towson Churches (ACTC), have made a tremendous impact. I encourage you to take a look at the impressive statistics. None of this would be possible without our dedicated volunteers and our small but mighty staff, who work every weekday to ensure food and assistance reach those in need.

ACTC serves not only families and individuals, but also provides vital support to local congregations. Instead of developing their own assistance programs, churches can refer calls for food and help to ACTC, streamlining efforts and expanding reach.

Exciting news—ACTC has secured a permanent home! Our new building at Allegheny and Bosley, originally a Methodist church, was later converted into offices by local businessman John Holman. Now, ACTC will use the ground floor for its operations, while the former sanctuary upstairs will serve as office and meeting space. This centralized location will allow us to serve the community more efficiently, providing assistance while welcoming neighbors as volunteers. Stop by and see it for yourself!

A heartfelt thank you to **Linda Lotz**, our Executive Director for over eight years of service. Her tireless dedication has elevated ACTC in countless ways. While she transitions to focus on relationships and funding, she will also be spending more time with her husband, Tim, and their growing family.

We also deeply appreciate **Ann-Thérèse Bechamps, Esquire**, for her invaluable legal guidance. Her expertise has strengthened ACTC as we continue to grow, and her talented team led us through the building acquisition process.

Our gratitude extends to our **Board of Directors**, whose diverse expertise—from business and finance to ministry—ensures your congregation's time and resources are maximized.

It is truly an honor to be part of ACTC. As we welcome **Susan Ballenger** as our new Executive Director, our mission takes on even greater significance in these uncertain times. If your congregation would like a presentation on ACTC's work, just let us know—we are eager to spread the word.

Thank you for making ACTC's work possible!

Sincerely,
Dave Britt

David Britt
President



A LETTER FROM OUR DEPARTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear ACTC Family,

As I step away from my role as Executive Director of ACTC, I am deeply grateful for the privilege of serving in this capacity. Every moment of this journey has been shaped by the Spirit and enriched by the dedication of our member churches, volunteers, staff, partners, and—most importantly—our neighbors.

I anticipated challenges during my tenure, though I could never have foreseen the magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, amidst the uncertainties, we found a way to serve every day and remained steadfast in our mission. I also recognized the need to modernize our organization while preserving its core identity as an association of churches, which we accomplished with the support of the ACTC Board of Directors, and the guidance of Anne-Therese Bechamps, counsel to our Board. A significant part of my role was finding ACTC a true home—a place of its own—which became a reality at **301 Allegheny Avenue**.

The highlight of each day has been working alongside our extraordinary volunteers, hard-working staff, dedicated Board of Directors, generous donors, enthusiastic churches, and beloved neighbors. You are the heart of ACTC, and you have made this work profoundly meaningful.

Our mission is never truly complete, yet I find peace in knowing that God is ever-present, working in ways beyond our understanding. We are not tasked with carrying the full weight of every need, but rather with embracing the portion entrusted to us—with love, generosity, and open hearts. What we give, God multiplies, weaving together the offerings of many to care for those in need.

All that is required of us is attentiveness to the Spirit's gentle prompting and a willingness to act with as much love and grace as we can offer. In doing so, we fulfill our purpose and play our part in God's ever-unfolding plan to care for the vulnerable in our community.

It is time to pass on the vision and work to a new cohort, led by Susan Ballenger, our new Executive Director, while preserving the best of who we are, and doing more as we can, and as makes sense, and is possible. There must be faith, compassion and love in all we do. God bless you all.

With gratitude,
Linda Strout Lotz

Linda Lotz
Executive Director



WE TRUST GOD TO GUIDE US AND TO PROVIDE WHAT IS NEEDED.

HELPING NEIGHBORS IN NEED

- 50,068** people assisted
- 1,883** people provided with 25,000 bags of food, personal hygiene products, and baby supplies
- 229** homeless individuals assisted who received 8,129 lunches, mail pickup, and other services
- 946** individuals and families assisted financially with \$171,414 combined
- 339** people provided with bus tokens and gas vouchers
- 316** children given Christmas presents
- 31** individuals newly released from incarceration provided with food and household necessities

SHARING GOD'S BOUNTY

- 367,458** pounds of food distributed
- 2,679** Thanksgiving baskets collected and shared

BEING OF SERVICE

- 12,000+** hours of volunteer time



WE BELIEVE IN BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH CARING FOR OUR NEIGHBORS.

Our volunteers are Christ's hands and feet on earth who enthusiastically serve our neighbors that are facing economic and personal challenges. They are truly the heart of ACTC and are the reason we are able to accomplish so much. In 2024, their work, in many different roles, provided significant impact for good in our community: 250 regular volunteer shifts monthly, and 2 or more large group volunteer events each month. In addition, our volunteers provided special gifts, such as the development of a new custom database to track our work and its impact, and training each other in its use.

In 2024, our volunteers continued to provide eviction and BGE turnoff prevention where possible, as well as limited stays in nearby motels. We spent our budget early in the year, and paused assistance for the later part of the year, until we resumed in 2025.



PROVIDING FOOD TO FOOD-INSECURE NEIGHBORS

In 2024, ACTC served those who came for groceries every two weeks within our 21-zip code service area, and provided lunch every weekday to more than 35 homeless individuals and their dependents. We purchased vast amounts of food, primarily from the Maryland Food Bank, as we continued to provide as generously as before. This continued through the year. Donations of food were very important coming from all sources, and volunteers worked in the distribution center in Towson, the warehouse in Timonium, and the Trinity Episcopal Church undercroft, with collection points continuing at Ascension Lutheran, Trinity Episcopal and Valley Baptist Churches. As food continued to be expensive and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits were insufficient to feed families, our neighbors came to get help make ends meet. Tammy Gabel and Leslie Strawhand worked tirelessly through the year to be sure we had sufficient food.

GIVING TIME AND COMPASSION

With the 1,000 hours of volunteer time given selflessly each month, we kept families facing eviction in their homes, provided food and personal care items to the homeless and groceries to the housed, listened to and addressed the concerns of callers, and matched generous supporters with struggling families during the Christmas season. Whether the task involved food drives, making sandwiches, picking up donations from stores, trouble shooting computers, dropping off water and fruit, packing groceries, waiting on clients, or transporting food, moving from one warehouse to another, our energetic and cheerful group of volunteers made everything happen!

WE STRIVE TO PROVIDE A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE FEELS WELCOMED AND RESPECTED.



Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
to loose the chains of injustice
and untie the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?
Is it not to share your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—
when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?
Then your light will break forth like the dawn,
and your healing will quickly appear;
then your righteousness will go before you,
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.
Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

Isaiah 58:6–9

Have you ever had to ask for help? It's not easy. For many of the neighbors we serve, the courage it takes to seek assistance is immense. Just like us, they face struggles, and often, unseen trauma shapes their journey. That's why ACTC and its volunteers strive to create an environment where every neighbor feels welcomed, respected, and valued.

A simple act of listening, fulfilling a need, or offering a moment of prayer or laughter can make all the difference. When approached with care and dignity, these interactions help ease the burden of asking for help—replacing shame with a sense of wholeness and restoring people to themselves as they are meant to be.

Taking the time to truly hear our neighbors, guiding them to the support they need, and offering presence, nourishment, financial assistance, and services—this is the heart of ACTC's mission. Through empathy and action, we continue to uplift and empower those who turn to us in times of need.



WE BELIEVE THAT ACTS OF LOVE AND KINDNESS CAN CHANGE LIVES.

"I chose this year's charity, the Assistance Center of Towson Churches (ACTC), to be the beneficiary of our fundraising events throughout my term as President, 2024–2025..."

ACTC brings together churches, community partners, and individuals to serve neighbors in need in northern and central Baltimore County offering groceries every two weeks for those in need. In addition, they provide services for those experiencing homelessness. These services include weekday lunches, Friday pick-up of toiletries and extra food for the weekend, clothing referral and mail pick-up.

ACTC is not an arbitrary charity that I selected, as I have a personal connection to ACTC. In the blistering summer of 2002 while studying for the bar, I was an unemployed and financially insecure (a.k.a broke) recent graduate of the University of Baltimore School of Law. I vividly recall a knock on the door, it was the BGE representative coming to disconnect service. I pleaded and asked him to please give me a few hours, as I needed the lights to study. "I am going to be a lawyer and need to pass this test." He acquiesced. I grabbed my keys and drove to ACTC where I found relief as they paid my utility bill that day.

Fast forward to this September issue of The Advocate. Over 22 years later I am no longer in need of ACTC services, but I am reminded of their impact on the community they serve. I am seeking your help to continue to support ACTC so that they may continue to impact our community as you never know who we are investing in.

I am sure ACTC didn't know over 22 years ago they were investing in the current president of the Baltimore County Bar, but they did, and now I have returned with a grateful heart and an army of members willing to pay it forward for other community members."

**- Sondra M. Douglas, President
Baltimore County Bar Association, 2024-2025**



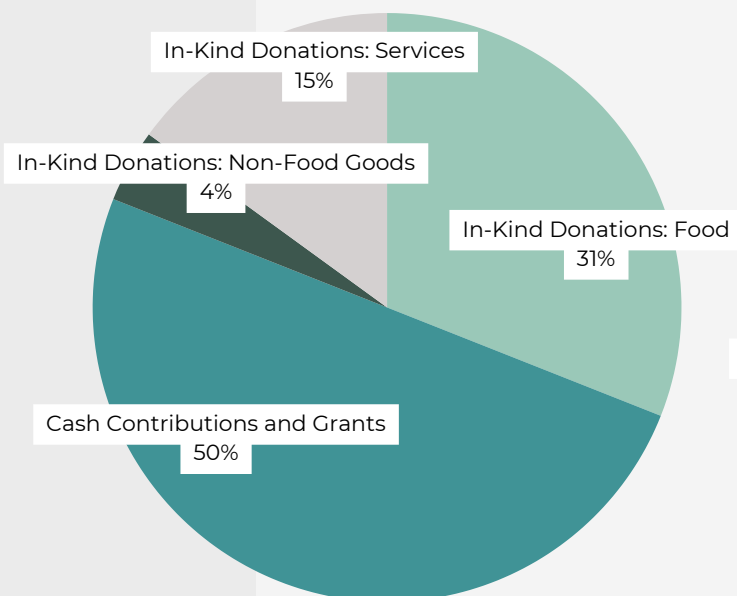
WE COMMIT TO THE RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF THE GIFTS OF OUR MEMBER CHURCHES, VOLUNTEERS, DONORS, AND OTHERS.

Financial aid programs that include eviction prevention, utility turn-off prevention, transportation, and emergency shelter, added up to roughly **\$171,000** in 2024.

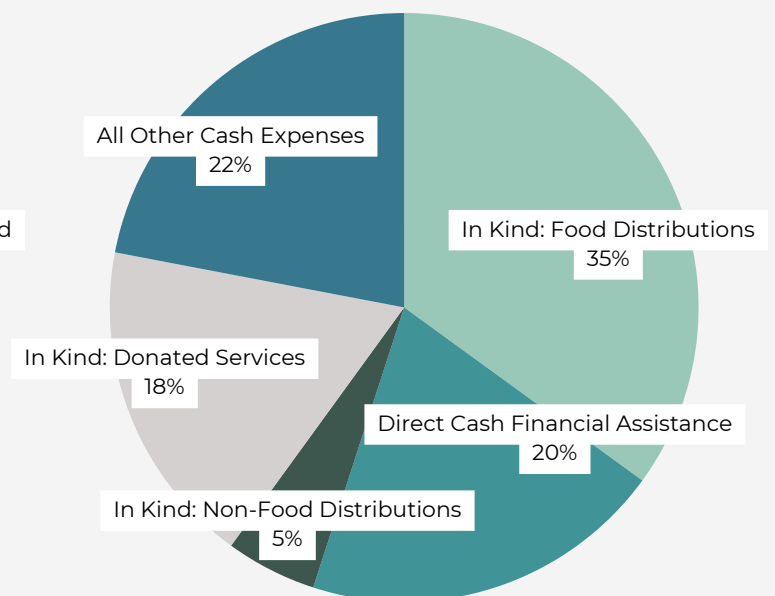
An estimated **\$559,000** was distributed through food, groceries, care bags and lunches for families and people that are homeless, Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets, and food certificates.

Additional care like the supply of toiletries, baby supplies, paper goods, clothing, Christmas gifts for children, and household products, were approximately **\$65,000** in total.

2024 Income – \$1,500,000



2024 Expenses – \$1,317,000



WE VALUE OUR PARTNERSHIPS WITH MEMBER CHURCHES, VOLUNTEERS, AND OTHERS IN OUR SHARED SERVICE.

ACTC is an extraordinary network of member churches, partner agencies, donors, businesses, and volunteers who make everything we do possible. None of our work would be achievable without the countless ways each person gives of themselves to support our mission.

In 2024, we faced the challenge of sustaining the pandemic model we launched in 2020, while reevaluating how best to serve our community in a post-pandemic world. From 2020 to 2024, we expanded services to meet increased needs, but this growth came at a cost—operating from multiple locations for office space, food storage, and food distribution was expensive and logistically challenging. Compounding the issue, COVID-related grants dried up as the demand for our services continued to rise.

Recognizing the need for transformation, we started imagining a more sustainable and impactful future. We visited agencies with client-choice food pantries and began to envision ACTC not just as a service provider but as a true community hub—offering nutritious food that our neighbors genuinely wanted, accompanied by guidance on how to make the most of it. With the right facility, we saw the potential to expand programs through partnerships and create a space that could help move those we serve to a more stable, sustainable future.

That vision took a significant step forward in 2024 when we identified a new location for our headquarters at 301 Allegheny Avenue in Towson. With unwavering support, we embarked on a rigorous process of due diligence, planning, and securing a special exception for zoning. This effort was led by Anne Therese Bechamps and her voluntary team from Venable, and in February 2025 our zoning exception was granted thanks to Adam Rosenblatt's expert preparation and presentation.

This success was made possible by the ACTC Board of Directors, the former property owners John and Fran Holman, the Venable legal team, and the encouragement of Councilman Mike Ertel, Delegate Cathi Forbes, and Steve Lafferty, Director of Baltimore County's Planning Department. With their support, we completed the purchase on March 24, 2025.

This milestone reflects the strength of our partnerships and shared commitment to care for our neighbors. As we move forward, we continue to rely on these partnerships to feed, clothe, and provide financial assistance to those who need us most. Together, we are making a difference—one act of love and generosity at a time.

MEMBER CHURCHES

Arnolia United Methodist
Ascension Lutheran
Babcock Memorial Presbyterian
Calvary Baptist
Central Presbyterian
Chestnut Ridge Baptist
Church of the Good Shepherd
Church of the Holy Comforter
Church of the Nativity
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
ChurchOne
Daybreak Christian Assembly
Divinity Lutheran
Edgewood United Methodist
First and Saint Stephen's
First Church of Christ, Scientist
Grace English Lutheran
Grace Fellowship
Greenspring United Methodist
Havenwood Presbyterian
Holy Cross Lutheran
Horizon Church
Hunt's Memorial United Methodist
Hunt Valley Church
Idlewylde United Methodist
Immaculate Conception
Joppa Bible Fellowship
Kingdom Worship Center
Loch Raven Presbyterian
Loch Raven United Methodist
Maryland Christian Church
Maryland Presbyterian
Mount Calvary A.M.E.
Mount Olive Baptist
NewThing
Providence United Methodist
St. Andrew's Episcopal
St. Francis Episcopal
St. John's United Methodist
St. Paul's Lutheran
St. Pius X
Timonium Presbyterian
Timonium United Methodist
Towson Presbyterian
Towson Unitarian Universalist
Towson United Methodist
Trinity Assembly of God
Trinity Episcopal
Valley Baptist
Woodbrook Baptist

2024 STAFF

Linda Lotz, Executive Director
Tammy Gabel, Center Operations Supervisor
Leslie Strawhand, Administrative Assistant
Jenifer Cornelius, Bookkeeper

2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rev. David Britt, President
Roslyn Canosa, Vice President
Jean Blair, Secretary
Roger Fiery, Treasurer
Jesse Gardner III, Director
Barry Rollins, Director
Meghan Wadsworth, Director
Rev. George Winkfield, Director
Anne-Thérèse Béchamps, Legal Counsel

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS AND BUSINESSES

Albright Farms
Baltimore Community Foundation
Baltimore County Bar Association
Baltimore County Communities for the Homeless
Baltimore County Department of Housing
and Community Development
Baltimore County Retired School
Personnel Association
Boy and Girl Scouts
Building for God Community Foundation
A Can Can Make a Difference
CARES/GEDCO
Community Assistance Network (CAN)
Emmert Hobbs Foundation
The Fresh Market
Louis & Phyllis Friedman Foundation
The Friendly Inn
Giant Food
Greater Baltimore Medical Center
Ladies of the Towson Elks
Lidl
Graul's Market
Kiwanis Club of Towson/Timonium
Kiwanis Club of Loch Raven
Maryland Food Bank
Masonic Charities of Maryland
Merritt Properties
Mid-Atlantic Properties
Mt. Moriah Charitable Foundation
Office of the People's Counsel
Renewal Foundation
Shoprite Timonium
Sprouts Market
St Paul's Schools
Towson Target
Towson Elks
Towson Service Foundation
United Churches Network (UCAN)
Wegmans Food Markets
Weis Market
Whole Foods Market