Interfaith Action of Evanston 2022 Annual Report





Greetings

2022: A Pivotal Year!

Inspired by diverse faiths and shared values, Interfaith Action of Evanston brings people together to serve hungry and homeless people, pursue interfaith dialogue, and engage in advocacy that promotes social justice for those we serve.

The year 2022 was a pivotal one for Interfaith Action of Evanston (IAE) as we moved more confidently into our role as a key player in the effort to find both short and long-term solutions to ending homelessness in our community.

The drive to end homelessness took a major step forward with the creation of the **Coalition to End Homelessness in Evanston**, a group of 25 nonprofit organizations working on issues of homelessness and hunger. Interfaith Action is one of the original core members of this group, bringing crucial familiarity with the challenges faced by those experiencing homelessness. Sue Murphy-Berube and Shawn Isles are part of the core group addressing Crisis and Interim Housing, and Jernone Smith serves on the Employment working group.

Interfaith Action proved again this year to be a valuable partner to the City of Evanston in confronting a short-term crisis. As fierce winds, bitter temperatures and blowing snow moved into the Chicago area ahead of the Christmas weekend, those experiencing homelessness in Evanston faced difficult choices. Many of the places at which they might otherwise shelter, such as the library and the drop-in facility at Hilda's Place, were closed for the holidays, and some places shut down earlier in anticipation of the storm.

Thanks to quick thinking and coordination between Audrey Thompson, director of Evanston's Parks and Recreation Department and IAE Executive Director Murphy Berube, the worst was avoided. Clients of Interfaith Action's morning and overnight shelters were transported to city recreation facilities where they could spend the afternoon and evening hours with heat, food, and each other. This approach has become the model for handling extreme weather events going forward and strengthened the ties between IAE and city leadership.

In another effort, IAE's advocacy team sought the first permanent year-round public restroom in Evanston in recent memory. Although a permanent solution remains elusive, we successfully secured two porta-potties. Working with Parking Manager and Acting Director of Administrative Services Michael Rivera, two Porta-Potties have been installed, one at 525 Church Street Parking Garage and the other at 1800 Maple Self-Park.

In pursuing long-term solutions, IAE is standing with our partner, Connections for the Homeless, as it seeks to establish a permanent facility in the **Margarita Inn**, where it has been housing more than 60 residents for three years. In addition to in-person support by IAE leaders at the Land Use Commission and community meetings where the Margarita Inn was debated, Interfaith Action circulated petitions among its member faith communities and garnered more than 600 signatures in support. We continue to advocate for this effort in 2023.

While taking these significant strides, we didn't lose sight of how we can marshal the significant volunteer power of our member faith communities to provide direct services and to **continually improve** those services. We added three weeks and new, longer blankets to our overnight shelter, extended our morning shelter schedule to meet the greater need of weekend mornings and continued to refine our SNAPGap program.

We are pressing ahead on all fronts in 2023!

Melissa Appett

Swan Burphy Beruke

President

Executive Director



Look What We Did in 2022

Hospitality Center

Open 260 days, IAE's Hospitality Center hosted 296 individuals with 5,024 visits in 2022. We had 243 men, 53 women. One hundred and one individuals visited the computer room and many also received employment assistance. St. Mark's remodeled the room we have had for the last 36 years with new bathrooms, lots of windows and a separate place for our guests to sleep. We celebrated with a ribbon cutting and Open House in September.



Warming Center/Winter Weekend Morning Shelter

The warming center that was open in early 2022 at St. Mark's continued to be open in the winter and early spring every day all week. In October we reopened at Hilda's Place each weekend morning and provided breakfast and a safe space during the morning hours. More than 173 people took advantage of the shelter.

Overnight Shelter

Open for 30 weeks in the 2022-23 season the emergency overnight shelter hosted 115 different individuals (95 men, 21 women). The shelters were hosted by nine faith communities in the downtown Evanston area: Beth Emet the Free Synagogue, First United Methodist Church, First Congregational Church, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, the Unitarian Church of Evanston, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Lake Street Church and First Presbyterian Church.



Producemobile

The Producemobile supplied more than 94,260 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to 7,970 people. This activity is made possible by our partnership with the Chicago Food Depository, the City of Evanston, and the 383 volunteers who distribute it each month. Additionally, the new SNAPGap initiative distributed approximately 12,955 cleaning and hygiene items such as laundry soap, hand soap, toilet paper, toothpaste, shampoo, much of which was donated, primarily by IAE's faith community members.

Soup Kitchens

Evanston Soup Kitchens continue to work together to ensure meals for our homeless and hungry neighbors. Many of the Soup Kitchens have been able to reopen their doors to serve indoors as they did before the pandemic. Those that are still handing out meals at the door are making plans to reopen in 2023.



2022 Financials

Broad Financial Support

As Interfaith Action expanded its services to better support those experiencing homelessness and food insecurity, its operating budget grew accordingly, and so did financial support from the community. Individuals, corporations, and foundations throughout the area gave generously, as did our faith community members.

An increased number of participants took part in and donated to Walk for Warmth. The Vision Keepers Dinner returned as an event that both honors those who make a difference and raises funds to support IAE's mission. Supplementing these contributions and event revenues were grants, primarily from the City of Evanston, and use of the organization's reserves.

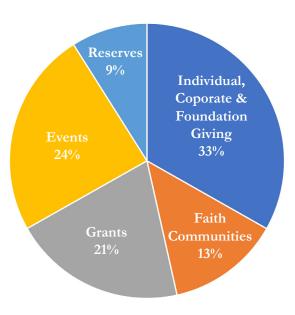
Volunteers and In-Kind Donations

The community's big heartedness was also visible in the form of thousands of hours of volunteer time which enabled the Hospitality Center, Weekend Warming Center, Overnight Shelter, Produce Mobile, and IAE-sponsored Soup Kitchens to operate efficiently and cost-effectively.

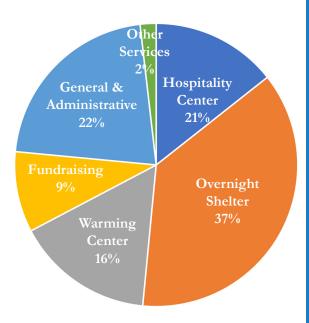
Beyond these volunteer hours, in-kind contributions were generously given. Just a few examples:

- Facilities provided rent-free by member faith communities
- Baked goods for Hospitality Center guests delivered by Beth's Little Bake Shopp
- Breakfasts prepared by caring individuals for guests at the Winter Weekend Warming Center
- Thousands of socks from Bombas
- Detergent sheets from Earth Breeze to benefit the SNAP Gap program.

Sources of Funds \$453,543



Uses of Funds \$453,543





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In addition to these funds, every year our loyal volunteers provide thousands of dollars worth of in-kind donations, particularly food at the Soup Kitchens, and the Hospitality Center and with life necessities through our SNAPGap program.

THANK YOU!





