



Serving the Local Community for over 50 years



#8305



#72413

FAIRFAX FISH, INC.

(FOR IMMEDIATE SYMPATHETIC HELP)

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 1, 2019 - MARCH 31, 2020

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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, 2020, Fairfax FISH was comprised of 14 churches located in the vicinity of Fairfax City, Virginia. The following is a list of the FY 2019-2020 participating churches:

Bethlehem Lutheran	Little River United Church of Christ
Christ Evangelical Lutheran	Lord of Life Lutheran
Good Shepherd Episcopal	Providence Presbyterian
Fairfax Baptist	Holy Spirit Catholic
Fairfax Community Church	St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic
Fairfax Presbyterian	St. Peter's In The Woods Episcopal
Fairfax United Methodist	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. For the Fiscal Year ending March 31, 2020, FISH was able to financially help 433 households consisting of 1,136 adults and children. Payments are made by the FISH Treasurer to landlords and utility providers, not directly to clients.

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. This very generous county assistance has enabled FISH to assist many more families than in previous years. FISH's "overhead" expenses are very low, and 92 % of donations go 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 it 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 147 deliveries to families, serving 235 adults and 181 children.

Clothing Ministry

For 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. 435 adults and 144 children walk-in clients visited during the period April 1, 2019 through March 12, 2020, when the closet was temporarily closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this same period we received 478 donations (some a small bag, some a carload.) In addition to individual donors, civic groups and businesses frequently conducted clothing drives to help fill our closet. FISH volunteers accept the bountiful and high quality donations from our faithful donors in the community, sort them, and distribute them to needy families. On average, five volunteers contribute about 40 volunteer hours per week receiving donations, displaying items, and operating the Clothing Closet. We have shared our abundance of clothing donations with other organizations or locations needing help. This year, 24 FISH clothing bags went to six other charities in need of clothing to give. During the winter, we opened the closet at night to accommodate several church-run hypothermia shelter groups.

Gasoline Ministry

Fairfax FISH continued to fund a gasoline ministry in Fairfax County, in cooperation with several area service stations. This year five 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.

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 and 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. And there are often thanks and hugs for the Clothing Closet volunteers for the apparel and other items that they are able to get for their families.

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.

FISH Volunteers

Special appreciation goes out to the nearly 90 FISH volunteers for their dedication and faithfulness to the program. This year FISH volunteers dedicated 9,300 hours and drove 5,237 miles helping 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 2019-2020 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 at least three times per week. Our website is www.fairfaxfish.org. Fairfax FISH can be contacted via email at 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 ended, the social and economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic had begun to affect our community. Sudden and widespread unemployment, school closures, food insecurity, and the stresses of an uncertain future, have quickly made FISH's mission more necessary and compelling. 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 16, 2020

FAIRFAX FISH, INC.

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

For the Years Ended March 31,

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Contributions and Grants	\$ 119,124	\$ 117,241
Expenses		
Program Expenses	90,970	87,471
Management and General	8,770	7,789
Total Expenses	<u>99,740</u>	<u>95,260</u>
Change in Net Assets	19,384	21,981
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	39,690	17,709
Net Assets at End of Year	<u>\$ 59,074</u>	<u>\$ 39,690</u>

Note: The latest Audit available covers April 2019 to March 2020.

FAIRFAX FISH, INC.

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

For the Years Ended March 31,

	<u>2020</u>			<u>2019</u>		
	<u>Program</u>	<u>Management & General</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Management & General</u>	<u>Total</u>
Housing	\$ 63,007	\$ -	\$ 63,007	\$ 60,277	\$ -	\$ 60,277
Utilities	17,360	-	17,360	15,957	-	15,957
Groceries and other	9,849	-	9,849	9,708.	-	9,708
Professional fees	-	4,025	4,025		3,900	3,900
Medical and dental	450	-	450	1,084	-	1,084
Insurance	-	1,628	1,628	-	1,565	1,565
Gasoline	304	-	304	364	-	364
Office supplies	-	1,650	1,650	-	924	924
Telephone	-	914	914	-	764	762
Miscellaneous	-	321	321	-	523	523
Bank Charges	-	232	232		113	113
Advertising	-	-	-	81	-	81
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Total Expenses	<u>\$ 90,970</u>	<u>\$ 8,770</u>	<u>\$ 99,740</u>	<u>\$ 87,471</u>	<u>\$ 7,789</u>	<u>\$ 95,260</u>

Note: The latest Audit available covers April 2019 to March 2020.