

HOPEFUL HAPPENINGS

Fall Edition 2023

A Newsletter of Catholic Charities of Fairfield County



A Message from Mike Donoghue,
our Executive Director

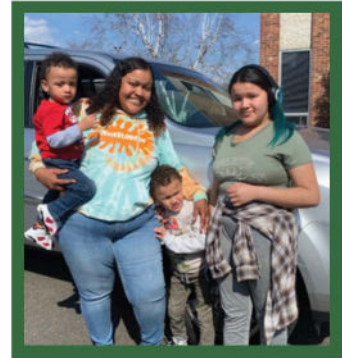
Happy Fall!

As the leaves begin to turn, I am reminded of the transformation of our clients lives that YOU make possible through the generosity of YOUR time, talent and treasure. Sadly, the need in our community is greater than ever as economic conditions are extremely challenging for our hard working, lower income clients due to rising expenses for essentials such as food, shelter and clothing. I appreciate YOUR consistent support of our neighbors in need during these difficult times.

With your help, a family in the Bridgeport area can now enjoy peaceful and comfortable rest, all thanks to the safe and cozy bedding YOU supply via our Furniture Ministry. With your steadfast support, New Outlook Counseling is expanding its counseling services to help even more community members struggling with anxiety and depression. Thanks to YOUR dedication to our mission, the newly constructed Thomas Merton Family Center will be opening later this Fall to provide not only much-needed food resources but also an expanded offering of critical wrap-around services, giving a compassionate 'hand up' to our most vulnerable neighbors in need.

Please know how grateful I am for your support! You are making a lasting impact on the lives of countless individuals and families as they strive to build a more stable future. Take a few minutes to learn about the services that YOU are making possible in our community!

God Bless You and THANK YOU for all you do,



Addressing the Homelessness Crisis Together

Fairfield County's rising homelessness, **now up by 13%**, is deeply concerning especially as families and children increasingly find themselves without shelter. In response to this crisis, a generous donor has pledged a **\$100,000 MATCH** for our initiatives!

Our mission extends beyond immediate relief, aiming to promote self-sufficiency. Your donation is invaluable and will make a difference. No one, especially a child, should sleep in a car or on the streets. Help ensure every Fairfield County resident finds a home.



Scan the QR code with your smartphone to make a contribution or visit

www.ccfairfield.org/donate

These *Hopeful Happenings* around Fairfield County

Introducing New Outlook Counseling

Catholic Charities of Fairfield County's 'New Outlook Counseling' represents an expansion of our behavioral health services, offering comprehensive and compassionate mental health care. For many individuals, seeking help is a challenging journey. The stigma surrounding mental illness frequently serves as a deterrent discouraging many from acknowledging their struggles and seeking help. Furthermore, the shortage of mental health professionals and the complexities of insurance coverage often add to these challenges. **This is where New Outlook Counseling plays a crucial role.**

New Outlook Counseling services are accessible to all, recognizing that mental health challenges impact people from all backgrounds and beliefs. Our team offers multi-lingual services in English, Spanish, and French to accommodate the diverse needs of our community.

The program not only includes therapy but also offers medication management services when deemed necessary. Our psychiatric prescribers are highly skilled in assessing medication needs, prescribing them appropriately, and closely monitoring their effects.

Clients of this program also benefit from group therapy, such as the "Anxiety Support Group." These sessions provide a safe and non-judgmental space where individuals can share their experiences, learn coping skills, and find support from others who are facing similar challenges.

With your support, we are committed to expanding these services reaching even more individuals in need and letting them know that they are not alone and that help is readily available.



Charlie Coretto, Director of
New Outlook Counseling

Turning Houses Into Homes

The Furniture Ministry is our newest initiative, as we are now managing the outstanding program built by the incomparable Sister Eileen Boffa. We have big shoes to fill! This program, currently focused mainly in the Bridgeport area, supports families moving from homelessness to their own homes by offering essential household furnishings.

We are currently most in need of twin beds, household and kitchen items, and smaller gently used furniture that will fit in a small apartment. We are also looking for volunteers who can help us pick up furniture and deliver to the homes of our clients in need. Please contact Ford Smith (fsmith@ccfc-ct.org) if you are interested in helping the Furniture Ministry.

The comfort of a child's first bed and the significance of a kitchen table for a family to gather around for dinner create a lasting impact on their lives. We hope to further expand this program as staffing and volunteers permit, extending a helping hand to more families in need.



Ford Smith, Program Manager
of Furniture Ministry



are made possible with **your support**. Thank you!

An Exciting Chapter for Thomas Merton Center

The Thomas Merton Family Center's renovation has made significant progress since its groundbreaking event in April. We hope to finish construction and open the doors of this exciting new facility at 1406 State Street in Bridgeport in late November.



Exciting progress being made during construction at the new location!

Our program's Case Managers are ready to provide their valuable resources to even more neighbors in need in this newly renovated building. Case Manager Daisy Rodriguez emphasizes that maintaining the same mission that originated in 1974 remains our top priority. She states, "We will continue to focus on our mission and the humanness of all our guests. My focus is on continuing the kindness, the sympathy, and the empathy we show all of our guests."

The Center continues to provide about 350 meals every day for breakfast and lunch, and we anticipate this number will increase in our new location. **In addition to meals and our food pantry, we will be providing many additional wrap-around services, such as primary medical care, behavioral health care, immigration legal assistance, housing case management, financial literacy training, and job training to give our guests a 'hand up' toward self-sufficiency.**

We are so very grateful for the many incredible volunteers who join us daily to prepare meals and serve our guests with a smile. We look forward to growing our mission and services in this new space with your support and invaluable care.

Fueling Hope with a Morning Meal

At Catholic Charities of Fairfield County, we cherish the belief that every morning should start with a nourishing meal. Our Morning Glory Breakfast Program is a testament to this, providing a safe and warm environment to the neediest in the area. The Morning Glory Non-Food Market Place Pantry also provides items such as cleaning products, paper goods and hygiene products.

At the end of August, our team at Morning Glory proudly announced expanded shower times. Guests can visit Dorothy Day Hospitality House located at 11 Spring Street in Danbury to take a shower on Wednesdays and Sundays. This decision was made to better serve the needs of our community members. Morning Glory staff is excited to reach more people in need of a place to shower with these new hours.

With rising needs in the community, we truly appreciate your partnership and support of Morning Glory Breakfast Program. Learn more about our program and how you can get involved by contacting Tamara Espinal, Director, at TEspinal@ccfc-ct.org.



Morning Glory team with Program Director, Tamara Espinal

Stay informed with exciting updates from ALL of our programs by following us on social media! Visit www.ccfairfield.org/socialmedia to find our accounts.





THANK YOU!

In a challenging year, your steadfast support has been crucial for our services in Fairfield County. Your donations, time, and talents have enhanced our outreach and addressed growing community needs.

Thank you for reinforcing our mission during these times; *your partnership radiates resilience and hope.*



You're invited...

UPCOMING FALL EVENTS

7-9AM
AMBER ROOM COLONADE
DANBURY, CT

CatholicCharities
**DANBURY
BREAKFAST**

GUEST SPEAKER
**BISHOP
FRANK CAGGIANO**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26

THE BIJOU THEATER
PRESENTS

OCTOBER 28, 2023

**MICHAEL JACKSON
EXPERIENCE**

FEATURING

JOBY ROGERS

BENEFITTING BETHLEHEM HOUSE
Catholic Charities' permanent supportive housing program for families with low income who have experienced homelessness.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28

The 13th Annual

harvest table

Sharing Abundance with Others

Please Join Us for a Bountiful Evening
to benefit **NEW COVENANT CENTER**

THURSDAY NOV. 2 2023	The Italian Center 1620 Newfield Ave. Stamford, Ct	6-9 —P.M.—
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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2

FIND ALL INFORMATION AND TICKETS AT WWW.CCFAIRFIELD.ORG/EVENTS

Support Our Services

[Website](#)

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