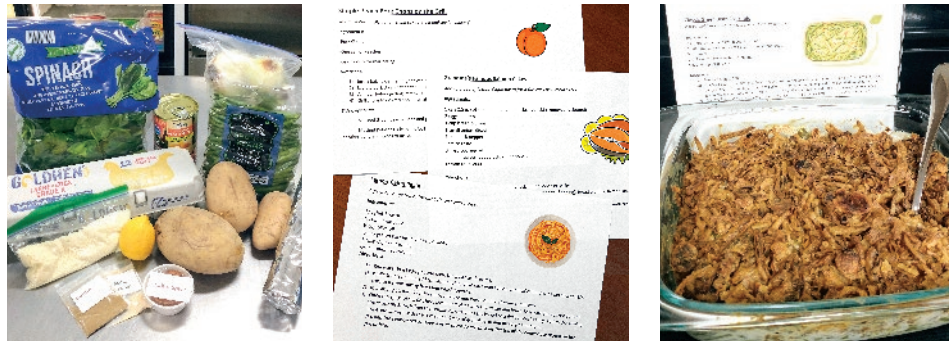


# EATS (Edible, Available, Time-Saving)

Our EATS program uses TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program) as a baseline and adds food items purchased by Outreach to make 4-5 complete dishes. Each EATS kit includes all ingredients (spices too!), instructions, cooking tips & tricks and recipes. Outreach clients can pick up EATS kits when they shop in the pantry or they can come by Outreach every week, while EATS supplies last.



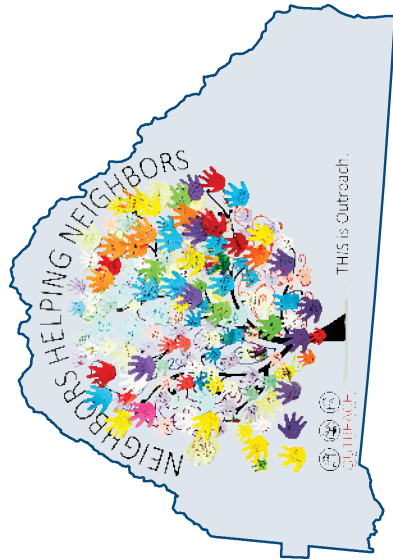
NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
ASHEVILLE NC  
PERMIT #575

## Horse Creek Village

Horse Creek Village is an affordable and supportive rental housing neighborhood Outreach is developing with the support of our generous donors. In 2024, thanks to the Estates of Ann Jacob Toms, Donald Lyons and Nell Deaver, three homes were added to the neighborhood. There are currently eight homes in Horse Creek Village including a 1-bed/1-bath duplex, as well as 2-bed/2-bath, 3-bed/2-bath and 4-bed/2.5-bath single-family homes. Fourteen children live in the neighborhood and enjoy playing together and riding bikes along the quiet streets. A 3-bed/2-bath house is currently under construction, with two additional homes planned for 2025.



 **OUTREACH**  
HELPING HANDS · CARING HEARTS  
P.O. Box 834  
Columbus, NC 28722



Like us on Facebook  
[www.tboutreach.org](http://www.tboutreach.org)  
828.894.2988



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Serving Polk County Since 1991

## This Is Outreach



## From Our 2024 Board President:

It was a privilege for me to work with the members of the outreach board, staff, volunteers and donors. The success that Outreach has achieved in 2024 is the result of all these people working together.



Jeff Carter

Outreach represents the best intentions of our community by providing food, rent, utility assistance and home repairs for people who are in need. The Life Works program at Outreach provides case management and support for people who have set goals for independence. It was gratifying when the Life Works program graduated the first participants who achieved their goals of buying and moving into their own house and achieving the goal of self-sufficiency.

Through the support of our donors, Outreach was able to complete three additional houses in Horse Creek Village. These homes provide stable housing for residents of Polk County who are having housing difficulties.

During the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, the Outreach staff stepped up without missing a beat, providing aid to people affected by the storm. In the two weeks after Helene, Outreach served approximately 74 new households.

While serving Helene victims, Outreach staff continued to organize food and gift distributions for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Seeing the happiness of both parents and children at Christmas distributions was a great way to end the year.

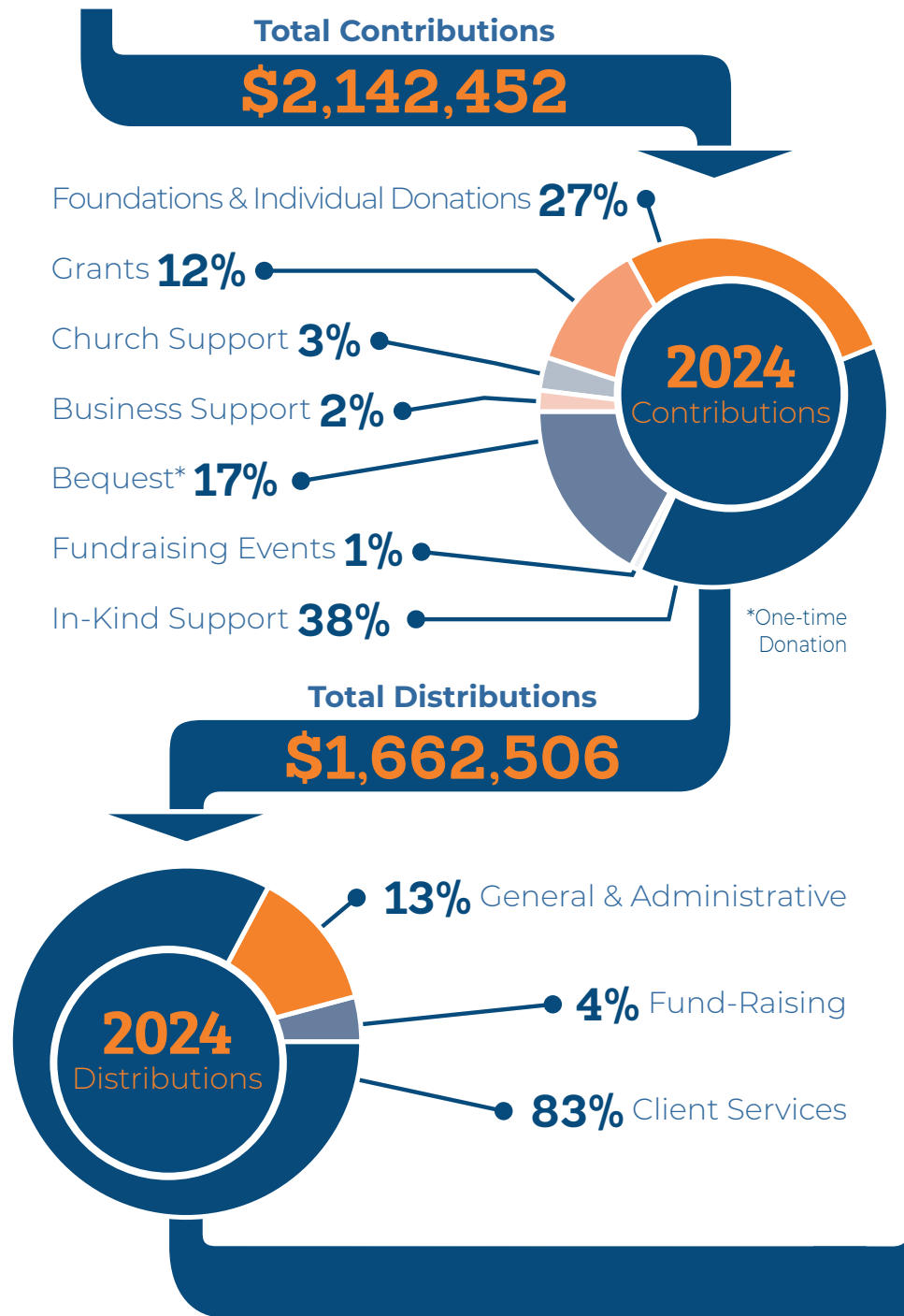
Jeff Carter



## 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Jeff Carter  
**Treasurer:** Bob Morrow  
**Vice Pres:** Amber Griffin  
**Secretary:** Heidi Shull  
**Members at Large:** Allan Purtill · Dave Scherping · Lane Price · Libby Morris  
Skip Crowe · Stewart Cameron · Todd Murphy

# 2024 Stewardship



# Program Impact

## Food Assistance

Neighbors shopped in our client-choice food pantry **2,903** times and selected an ample amount of food to feed their family for more than one week. **76,064 lbs\*** of fresh produce were provided to families, helping residents in need eat more healthily. **2232** EATS (Edible, Available, Time-Saving) meal kits including USDA commodities were distributed to families and individuals. \*Due to damage caused by Helene, poundage reported is an estimation based on the average weight of deliveries since the storm.

## Financial Assistance

We helped **39** households avoid foreclosure or eviction by assisting with rent / mortgage payments. We assisted **10** families with home repairs. **181** families received utility assistance, or were provided with fuel oil, kerosene, fans, heaters or loads of wood. **67** people received transportation support to help travel to important appointments and run critical errands.

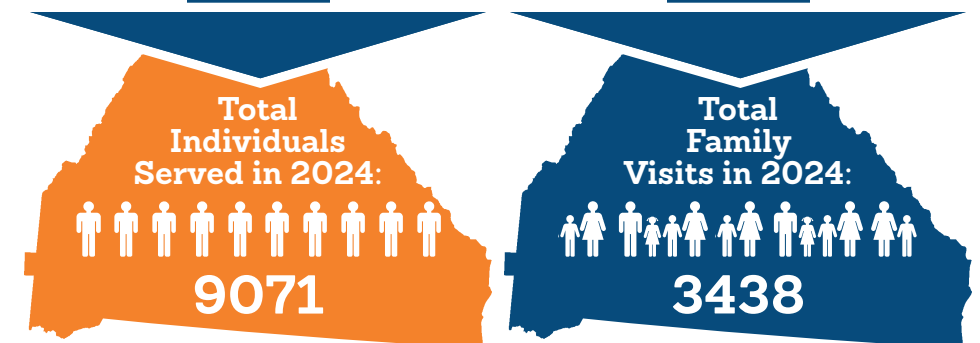
## Programs for Children

On **627** occasions we assisted families with baby supplies including diapers, formula, wipes and other necessary items. **10,259** packs of weekend food helped to alleviate hunger for school children facing food insecurity at home. **428** new backpacks and grade appropriate school supplies were given to qualified school children, ensuring all Polk County students had the tools they needed for academic success.

## Special Programs

**\$1,696,708** worth of in-kind donations including food, household goods and pet food benefited local families. Through our partnership with Meals on Wheels we distributed **1,800** care packages to **150** homebound participants. We served **468** families with Thanksgiving and/or Christmas holiday meals and distributed **689** gifts to qualifying children and senior citizens. **8,541** essential household items deemed excess by retailers were distributed through the food pantry to our neighbors. **1856** pet food provisions were contributed to our neighbor's beloved dogs and cats.

# Provided benefits to...



*One family or individual may have been served several times during the year. All family members are counted. On average, families visit Outreach 4-5 times a year.*

**Auditor's Remarks:** A recent independent audit of Outreach's finances performed by Prager Metis, CPA PLLC found Outreach to be in a sound financial position. Outreach met every requirement, exceeded every measure, met every compliance standard and received no findings. Complete audited financial statements may be obtained by request.

# 2024 At A Glance

In the aftermath of **Hurricane Helene**, Outreach immediately shifted focus to disaster response. We packaged food boxes stacked with items answering to the immediate needs of Polk County. A "Grab & Go" supplies tent was created, stocked with essentials like baby products & adult incontinence items, bottled water, paper towels & toilet paper, cleaning supplies, tools and more. Our conference room was turned into a distribution center to process and account for the large quantities of supplies that were rapidly pouring into Polk County and WNC. Thank you to Columbus Service Center and Polk County Community Foundation for donating necessary storage units, which helped us store overflow items until they could be distributed! Thanks to Dogwood Health Trust, The Community Foundation of Western NC and Polk County Community Foundation, Outreach was able to help many impacted by Hurricane Helene with rent & utility payments, debris removal and home & driveway repairs. During the month of October Outreach served 501 families representing 1,452 individuals.



**Home Repair Program** In 2024, Outreach supported Polk County homeowners through the Urgent Repair Program (URP), funded by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. These critical home repairs included roof replacements and repairs and HVAC system replacements. Thanks to support from Doors2Change, Outreach also assisted additional families with essential home needs such as tree removal, pest control treatment, hot water heater replacement, and sink repairs.

## Client Programs Spotlight



2024 Holiday Gift Distribution



School Supply Bags prepared for 2nd Grade



Wood Being Split For Outreach Firewood Program

# A Community Effort Thank You Polk County

You, our Outreach volunteers and donors, are the heart of our organization. Without your compassionate care and support of our community, Outreach would not be able to continue our work. 2024 presented a perfect example as I experienced firsthand our community rise to the occasion in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene. Outreach was grateful for all the volunteers who showed up ready to help every morning and appreciated every donation that was shared by neighbors near and far. Thanks to you, Polk County and WNC neighbors impacted by this storm were not without food or important necessities. As we move into 2025, thanks to your benevolence, Outreach will continue to provide food and shelter assistance to ensure no one in Polk County is hungry, cold or without shelter. Thank you for your continued support and for the positive impact you are making in our community.



Margot Carter  
Executive Director

*"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."*

~ Coretta Scott King

# 2024 Grantors

We wish to thank the following organizations for providing critical financial support to help Outreach fulfill its mission.



# 2024 Gift-In-Kind

We thank these following organizations for providing In-Kind donations of food.



*\*Due to damage caused by Helene, poundage reported is an estimation based on the average weight of deliveries since the storm.*