

HARC

HAGERSTOWN AREA RELIGIOUS COUNCIL



2024 **IMPACT** Report

Our year in the community





*HARC's mission is to embody mercy,
justice and love as diverse faith partners
in Washington County, Maryland.*

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harccoalition.org

Message from HARC's Board president



Rev. Christopher Serufusa

It was a busy 2024 for HARC! New programs were launched, more of our neighbors in need were served, and relationships were strengthened through outreach and working together.

Our biggest project in 2024 was the **Lighthouse After-School Program** that officially took off in September. As of this writing, the program is already serving more than 200 children by providing fun, educational programs at five different schools at the end of the school day. In continued partnership with Washington County Public Schools and faith leaders, we're hoping to expand this effort in 2025.

The **Refugee Welcome Network**, which operates under the auspices of HARC, had a very busy year! The faith community worked together to "welcome the stranger," helping dozens of refugee families get settled in the area, providing housing, food, furniture, and many other needs. Volunteers stepped up to assist these families in "transitioning from fear and fleeing to freedom and feeling at home."

Always HARC's biggest fundraiser of the year, the **Hike for Hunger and Hope**, was triple-blessed in 2024 with a 2-1 fundraising match from God's Grace Fund, for which we are so very grateful. As a result, the Hike raised \$77,000 for HARC, Micah's Backpack, and the Refugee Welcome Network! By far, our best year yet. To all the hikers, volunteers, donors, and sponsors who came together to make the Hike such a successful event, we thank you and look forward to the 2025 Hike!

In 2024, we held our third-annual **Interfaith Progressive Dinner**, inviting families from the

Refugee Welcome Network to join us to experience the diversity of faith traditions represented in HARC. The fellowship we enjoyed was enriching and the food was delicious!

The **Washington County Black Professionals Network** continues to meet regularly and the **Black-owned Business Directory** continues to grow. Four more **Equity in Education Scholarship** recipients were named in June. Efforts such as these help to further justice and equity in our community.

As you'll see in this report, the work of HARC, along with our partners in the faith community and the broader Washington County community is extensive, touching many areas of need, offering hope, as well as opportunities to get involved and give back. Our gratitude is just as extensive – to our partners, our members, our volunteers, and our donors. We all work hard together to make our vision for a better, more compassionate community a reality. The work is so gratifying.

As I write this, I reflect on my term as HARC's Board of Directors President coming to an end. My brother, Rabbi Mark Perman, who faithfully served as vice president, will have taken over as Board President by the time you read this. My stepping down is bittersweet, but I know the Board and HARC are in very capable hands!

Thank you all for this wonderful opportunity to serve. May God richly bless you!

Rev. Christopher Serufusa
St. Andrew's United Methodist Church

1 *We believe in the power of faith communities working together.*

We strive to listen when God is speaking, and act boldly together to make a difference in our community. We build collaborations across boundaries of religious differences, as well as with community organizations, to do the work we are called to do.

*THE ESSENCE OF **HARC**: EVERYTHING WE DO FALLS UNDER THIS BELIEF*

The pages of this report are filled with evidence of the *power of faith communities working together*. Much of this work also fits under other categories, so here we focus primarily on the building of interdenominational and interfaith relationships, which leads to more tangible efforts that fall under our other three Belief Statements.

Interfaith Progressive Dinner

On Saturday, September 21, our third-annual Interfaith Progressive Dinner was held, with three different houses of faith participating: Congregation B'nai Abraham (Jewish), Beaver Creek Church of the Brethren (Christian-Anabaptist), and the Islamic Society of Western Maryland (Muslim). At each location, participants enjoyed culturally relevant foods and faith leaders presented a short program on the history and beliefs of their faith. Families from the Refugee Welcome Network were invited to take part in this unique event, to experience first-hand the flavors of our faith community's diversity.



At left, the mosque of the Islamic Society of Western Maryland welcomed Progressive Dinner guests. Above, guests enjoyed soup and salad at the synagogue of Congregation B'nai Abraham.



Two local Ramadan Iftar dinners open to the public

The Islamic Society of Western Maryland and the Islamic Center of Hagerstown each hosted a traditional breaking of the fast after sundown—an Iftar dinner—during Ramadan in March. Each event was open to the public and free of charge to attend. The Iftar dinners provided opportunities to connect and build relationships through fellowship and sharing of food during the holiest time of year for our Muslim brothers and sisters.

Good Friday Unity Walk

On March 29, more than 100 Christians from various denominations across the area came together at Hagerstown's City Park for HARC's annual Good Friday Unity Walk. This event features readings and songs of faith as participants walk through the park, stopping at seven different stations. After each station, someone volunteers to carry the cross to the next stop, symbolizing Christ's Passion. This moving and meaningful experience begins the Easter season, and fosters a cohesive unity among Christian brothers and sisters.



The Interfaith Retreat...



... was a day of exploration, creativity, and connection. Held on March 2, the theme was "Let the Spirit Move You." Featured were Primordial Qigong, a meditative art project for creative expression, and the poetry of Rumi as avenues to explore our relationship with the Divine.

Historic Houses of Worship Tour



Always free and open to the public, this annual tour was held on December 26. A wonderful opportunity to see the interiors of historic downtown Hagerstown houses of worship, participants learned about the architecture and heritage of each location from docents. Many locations provided music and refreshments as well. This popular event is a self-guided walking/driving tour and was a collaboration of the houses of worship, HARC, and Visit Hagerstown.



Photo by Andrew Stanicek

Interfaith Community Thanksgiving Service



Our annual **Interfaith Community Thanksgiving Service** was held on Sunday, November 24, at Benevola United Methodist Church in Boonsboro, Md. Leaders from various faith traditions — including Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Baha'i, and Native American — participated in this unique service.

Rev. Ed Poling (*bottom photo*), retired Brethren pastor, was a featured speaker. As one who was part of the formation of HARC's Interfaith Coalition in 2002 (now our Interfaith Team), Ed shared his gratitude for how interfaith cooperation in Washington County has grown over the years.

A community choir was featured, with dozens of volunteer vocalists arriving early to practice "Sing to the Lord of Harvest," presented during the service. A free-will offering was taken at the door of non-perishable food and other items for Benevola's food pantry. A reception was held afterwards in the church fellowship hall.

Mark your calendar for the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service in 2025: Sunday, November 23 at Congregation B'nai Abraham.

Photos from top: Imam Nazir Faruki of the Islamic Society of Western Maryland; Zsun-nee Matema representing Native American faith traditions; Rev. Ed Poling, retired Brethren pastor.



The Season for Nonviolence

Beginning each year on January 30, the anniversary of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, the Season for Nonviolence ends on April 4, the anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Those 64 days are set aside for practice of the principles of Gandhi, King, and others to bring about peace and nonviolence in our world. HARC's Interfaith Team promoted this season with resources to encourage the practice of peace for all ages. Information can be found on harccoalition.org under the **Resources** tab.



*We believe in the unlimited potential
of every child.*

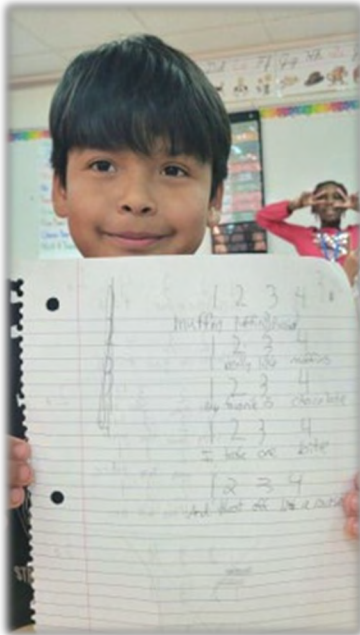
We focus our collaborative efforts on building supports around
and creating opportunities for children and families.

NEW IN 2024

Lighthouse After-School Program launches

As a result of HARC faith leaders meeting regularly over the past two years with Hagerstown's Mayor Tekesha Martinez, and conversations with Kim Duncan, Community School Specialist Coordinator for Washington County Public Schools, the Lighthouse After-School Program was launched in September of 2024. Lighthouse provides children a safe place within schools to enjoy fun, educational, and enriching programs after their school day ends.

Currently offering eight programs for children in 17 time slots in five different schools, more than 200 children are learning by participating in activities such as board games, art, songwriting, mindfulness & yoga, civics, financial literacy, and more—all disguised as fun! **Coming in 2025:** Cooking, singing, astronomy, and any other interests we can add!



The Lighthouse After-School Program offers songwriting sessions (*above and upper right*), as well as supervised games (*lower right*).



To serve more children and expand the days per week, we need more:

- **Program Leads** who can commit to regular sessions for at least one marking period and have a passion for working with children. This role can be paid a stipend, or gifted as a volunteer.
- **Volunteers** who can assist in the clubs.
- **Volunteers** who are willing to substitute for Program Leads, if needed.
- **Monetary donations** to help fund the program. WCPS is covering some, but not all, of our costs.

For more information, or to help with any of the above needs, contact Angela Yamashita, Program Coordinator
240-347-0780 OR yamashitaangela6@gmail.com



*Meet Lighthouse
Program Coordinator*
Angela Yamashita

As Lighthouse Program Coordinator, Angela Yamashita works with Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) and

HARC's faith community partners to provide students with enriching, extended learning opportunities.

With a background in Management Information Systems, Angela's community service began more than 13 years ago at Girls Inc. of Washington County, where she led programs in dance and fitness, literacy, and mentoring.

In addition to her role with HARC, Angela currently serves as Vice-Chair on the Washington County Diversity and Inclusion Committee. She has served as coordinator of the Little Leadership Academy Group Mentoring Program and the Youth Leadership Academy as part of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Washington County.

"Seeing the faith community unite to support the Lighthouse After-School Program and the positive impact on the students and families we serve has been deeply rewarding. It reaffirms the power of community coming together in compassion and love."

— Angela Yamashita

Micah's Backpack

A partnership of HARC, Washington County Public Schools, Maryland Food Bank, and 48 sponsoring houses of worship and organizations.

The need for the Micah's Backpack program has continued to grow. The program currently serves nearly 1,300 children, with waiting lists at two schools. We are very grateful to all of our sponsoring houses of worship and organizations that do the work every week of assembling the backpacks and delivering to the schools they sponsor. We're also grateful to the school liaisons, who face so many challenges in their jobs, yet still make it a priority to identify children who are food-insecure and make sure they receive their bags of food each week.

In 2024, we were blessed to secure funding through various grant programs, but we are still in desperate need of additional sponsoring houses of worship and organizations who would be willing to join us in our efforts to make sure no child in Washington County goes hungry.



We asked parents:

"What do you like about Micah's Backpack?"

"It has helped me make sure they are fed and don't have to skip or do without a meal."

"The food comes home because I have no transportation to the food bank."

"If they get hungry, they know there's food. They can easily eat without turning on the oven."

Micah's Backpack makes a difference

Survey results from the 2023-24 school year

- 94% of school personnel believe the program supports student engagement in learning and improved grades.
- 79% of families said the food enables them to have money for other living expenses.
- 100% of school personnel say this program facilitates a positive relationship between the school and the home.
- 73.5% of families said with Micah's Backpack, no one in the family skips meals because they can't afford enough food.
- 45% of students said they pay more attention in school because they are not hungry.



We asked kids:

“What do you like about Micah’s Backpack?”

“The way we get food when Mom doesn’t have the money for food.”

“It’s not judgmental to people who need food.”

“How it helps so many families everywhere.”

“It comes with cereal and it’s easy to make for my brother.”

“They give you food on weekends so you don’t go hungry.”



thank you

We are so grateful to these sponsoring houses of worship and organizations who did the bulk of the day-to-day work of providing food for children through Micah’s Backpack in 2024:

Bethel United Methodist Church

Brownsville Church of the Brethren

Concordia Lutheran Church

Crossroads Church

Emmanuel United Methodist Church

Evangel Baptist Church

First Christian Church

Grace United Methodist Church

Hagerstown Church of the Brethren

Hagerstown Church of the Nazarene

Haven Lutheran Church

Hilltop Fellowship Church

Hollowell Brethren in Christ

Interfaith Service Coalition (supported
by Hancock area churches)

John Wesley United Methodist Church

Marsha Green & Family

Maugansville Bible Brethren Church

Mt. Moriah Lutheran Church

Otterbein United Methodist Church

Paramount Brethren in Christ

Presbyterian Church of Hagerstown

Redeeming Grace Church

Rehoboth United Methodist Church

Ringgold Church

Salem Lutheran Church

Shiloh United Methodist Church

Smithsburg Valley Church

South Washington County Food Pantry

(supported by churches in South Washington County)

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church

St. Ann Catholic Church

St. Ann’s Catholic School

St. James School

St. John’s Episcopal Church

St. John’s Lutheran Church

St. Joseph Catholic Church & America’s Hauling for Hope

St. Maria Goretti High School

St. Mark’s Episcopal Church

St. Mark’s Lutheran Church

St. Mary’s Catholic School

St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Funkstown

St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Smithsburg

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Trinity Lutheran Church, Hagerstown

Trinity Lutheran Church, Smithsburg

Unitarian Universalist Church of Hagerstown

Williamsport United Methodist Church

Zion Lutheran Church

Zion Reformed & Christ’s Reformed UCC



NEW IN 2024

Two children's interfaith day camps

In January, HARC's Interfaith Team coordinated an Interfaith Children's Day Camp at the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts. Dozens of area children participated in a fun day of artistic exploration of various faiths, story time, and even a scavenger hunt within the museum!

In August, a three-day Community Builders Day Camp was held at the Washington County Free Library in downtown Hagerstown. In addition to welcoming Mayor Tekesha Martinez, who taught a lively workshop on feelings and conflict resolution, the children enjoyed creative activities such as a hands-on origami demonstration led by Ven. Temm Bikle, Buddhist monk (*pictured below left*), music, games, and a visit from a live tortoise! These day camps were free of charge and open to children in first through fifth grades.



NEW IN 2024

HARC was pleased to join the ENVY partnership in 2024. **ENVY—Ending Needless Violence with our Youth**—is a program working to decrease youth and gang-related violence in Washington County, Md., by providing alternative activities for kids.


**YOUNG
FUTURES
IN THE
MAKING**

3

*We believe all people have equal value
and are loved by God.*

We seek justice for those who are not treated equally or given equal value by our broken world. We strive to lift up the unique gifts and abilities of people and empower them to be who they were made to be.

Refugee Welcome Network

“Helping families transition from fear and fleeing to freedom and feeling at home.”

Under the auspices of HARC, the **Refugee Welcome Network (RWN)** helps to build bridges for refugees fleeing from violence or persecution in their home country. We support their transition into U.S. culture as residents of Washington County, Md. We believe all people have inherent worth and dignity. The RWN strives to honor the individuality of its participants, and seeks to understand and uphold the individual's beliefs, culture, ideas, and life journey.

The RWN seeks to establish, develop, and maintain the spirit of community among families, volunteers, and community groups. Our ultimate goal is for individuals to feel welcomed and become self-sufficient. Since its inception in 2023, the RWN has helped dozens of refugee families become settled, productive members of our community.



There are many volunteer opportunities



The work of the Refugee Welcome Network is done almost entirely by volunteers. There are many opportunities to help!

- ▶ **Become an Ally:** *Most needed!* Work directly with a family or individual to determine their needs and coordinate with other RWN teams to ensure the needs are met. Spend time with the family, as you're able, getting to know them, helping them feel welcome in our community.
- ▶ **Household & Furnishings:** Arrange for access to furnishings and household goods and/or help move furniture.
- ▶ **Workforce Development:** Connect refugees to appropriate resources, assist in accessing education, ESL, employment training, etc.
- ▶ **Fundraising:** In collaboration with RWN's Finance Team, develop and enact fundraising programs, including direct solicitation, grants, and special events.

Here's what we accomplished together

in 2024 with God's grace, alongside community partners and refugees themselves who have begun giving back to help others:

- ▶ 24 families/individuals—a total of 70 people!— welcomed and assisted with building new lives in Washington County.
- ▶ 11 families/individuals are now independent and 2 have moved to other cities.
- ▶ 4 babies were born: *"Made in America!"*
- ▶ We've made many new friends and have had wonderful cross-cultural learning opportunities.
- ▶ Our community has been blessed with amazing individuals who will positively contribute to our economy and culture.

Other ways you can help the RWN

We are so grateful for your prayers for this mission. If you'd like to make a monetary donation, you can donate on HARC's website homepage. Just click the orange DONATE button and designate your donation to "Refugees." You can also write a check to HARC and write "Refugees" on the memo line. Send to HARC, P.O. Box 1158, Hagerstown, MD 21741. If you'd like to become more involved by volunteering, please email us at refugeewelcome@harccoalition.org or call 301-842-4272.

To learn more about the Refugee Welcome Network scan this QR code:



Or visit:

www.harccoalition.org/programs/refugee-welcome-network



Upper right photo: Khan (right), received a Certificate of Excellence from his employer, FedEx. He's pictured with Jane Powell, his ally from the RWN.

Lower right and left photos: RWN Volunteer Ted Howe assists a family with moving donated household goods from storage space to their apartment.



The Racial Justice Team

THE WASHINGTON COUNTY BLACK PROFESSIONALS NETWORK

First launched in 2023, the Washington County Black Professionals Network (WCBPN) continued to provide opportunities to connect for Black professionals in the area in 2024.

In addition to professional networking, the mission of the WCBPN has always been to attract and retain under-represented professionals in the community by establishing connections for Blacks of the African diaspora in Hagerstown and surrounding areas.

WCBPN had three successful events in 2024, providing an engaging and networking experience for Black professionals and business owners in Washington County.



Ladetra Robinson

In September, Ladetra Robinson was hired as the new coordinator of the WCBPN.

The ever-expanding Black-owned Business Directory, fostered by the WCBPN, includes dozens of businesses in the Washington County area.

BLACK-OWNED Business Directory



To view or download your copy of the Black-owned Business Directory, visit harccoalition.org/black-owned-business-directory OR scan the code above.



Like/Follow our page at facebook.com/WCBPN

The WCBPN Facebook page has also increased its followers by posting news and events of interest to Black professionals and entrepreneurs in the community.

In 2025, the WCBPN will continue to hold quarterly meetings and host networking gatherings, as well as collaborate with our community partners in initiatives that support black professionals and business owners.



From left, Dr. David Sovine, WCPS superintendent, joins this year's recipients: Janeice Bates, Carmen Diaz, Hakema Mutanu, and Precious Steel. Second from right, Allison Smith, Supervisor of Equity and Excellence for WCPS; and Kathy Powderly, Executive Director of HARC.

Equity in Education Scholarships awarded

The 2024-2025 Equity in Education Scholarship recipients were honored on June 12 with a reception at the Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) Administrative facility. This privately funded partnership between HARC and WCPS has awarded \$45,000 in scholarships since 2022.

Multiple scholarships are awarded annually ranging from \$1,500 to \$7,000 to racially minoritized students (with preference to African American students) who reside and/or teach in Washington County, Md., and are pursuing a degree in education or a related field.

Funding for the scholarships has been provided by The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, Soroptimist International of Hagerstown, and many individual donors.

We're seeking donations for the 2025-2026 scholarship cycle and to build an endowment to continually fund this scholarship in the future. Donations can be made from the HARC website home page, designated to "Equity in Education Scholarship."



Applications accepted February 1 through March 31, 2025
Scan the code for complete details, criteria, and ways to help.

4

We believe in equipping one another to create stronger houses of worship.

We build relationships among clergy and people of faith, and support and encourage one another. We provide information, resources, and connections to enhance the work of congregations, ministries, and community organizations.

AT OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS, YOU CAN CONNECT & LEARN

One of the ways we **equip one another** is by presenting informational programs at our monthly meetings. Programs are relevant for and geared to faith leaders and members, but anyone can attend. Our meetings are also a great place to network, catch up with old friends and meet new ones! Below are program topics in 2024.

JANUARY: At our **Annual Meeting**, HARC's member houses of worship and organizations elected new Board members and officers, voted on the 2024 budget, and welcomed our guest speaker, **Dr. David T. Sovine**, Superintendent of Washington County Public Schools (*pictured at right*).

February's meeting was canceled due to inclement weather.

MARCH: **"Getting to Know You"** We shared a meal together and enjoyed the company of faith leaders, affiliate member leaders, and others in our network. (*not recorded*)

APRIL: **"Hope, Healing, Recovery"** was hosted by Brook Lane, western Maryland's largest, non-profit mental health system. **Jeffrey D. O'Neal**, Brook Lane's CEO, spoke on the facility's history, its mission, and its expansion over the years of available services.

MAY: **"Equity, Diversity, Recruitment and Talent Development in our Schools"** **Allison Smith**, Supervisor of Equity and Excellence from Washington County Public Schools shared the work WCPS is doing to increase diversity and equity in our schools, and to recruit and develop staff. (*not recorded*)

JUNE: **"The Thomas Kennedy Center, Religious Freedom and Inclusiveness"** **Tom Riford** (*pictured at right*) spoke about the Thomas Kennedy Center, which celebrates Hagerstown-Washington County's 19th-century state legislator Thomas Kennedy's efforts to advance religious liberty and inclusiveness.



Unless otherwise noted, all programs/speakers at our monthly meetings can be viewed on **HARC's YouTube** channel.



HARC's monthly meetings do not take place in July or August.

SEPTEMBER: "The Refugee Welcome Network" The RWN connects refugees newly arrived in Washington County to community resources, including housing, jobs, food and clothing, and supports them with friendship.

OCTOBER: "Dementia Friendly Washington County" Representatives from Dementia Friendly Washington County (DFWC) — a group of local individuals and organizations raising awareness and decreasing stigma — shared their efforts to make this area a dementia friendly place to thrive.

NOVEMBER: "Lighthouse After-School Program" Kim Duncan, Community Schools Coordinator for Washington County Public Schools, spoke about the need for wrap around supports for children in our schools. Angela Yamashita, Lighthouse Program Coordinator, provided updates on this new program (*see page 8*), which is a partnership of HARC member houses of worship and WCPS.



At the September HARC meeting, Jamal Khurshid, left, shares his refugee story as Basheer Azizi translates. To view this video on YouTube, scan the code.



DECEMBER: HARC members and friends gathered to share what's going on in their lives and/or their congregations and organizations. We also had the opportunity to explore the new campus and worship space of Impact Ministries as they prepare for growth and expanded community outreach.



HARC would like to thank the houses of worship and community partners who so graciously hosted our monthly meetings in 2024. Providing meeting space, AV equipment, and dedicated volunteers who made and served delicious buffet meals for around 40 people each month are all commitments to service that we so appreciate. **Thank you!**

January: Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints

February: *meeting canceled due to inclement weather*

March: St. Mark's Lutheran Church

April: Brook Lane

May: Zion Baptist Church

June: Congregation B'nai Abraham

September: First Christian Church

October: Otterbein United Methodist Church

November: Zion Reformed

United Church of Christ

December: Impact Ministries

Ideas for monthly programs? Interested in hosting? Please let us know!

Do you or your organization have an idea for a HARC monthly program topic? Would your house of worship or organization be interested in hosting a HARC meeting in 2025?

If so, contact Kathy at director@harccoalition.org or call 301-842-4272.



visit **harccoalition.org**

... for a wealth of resources and information to address many different kinds of needs people may have in our community. Under our **Resources** tab, you'll find lists of where help can be found for: food, clothing, personal care; children and families; housing and shelter; immigrant resources; and more.

We offer resources for clergy, resources for congregational vitality, faith-based counseling services, racial justice resources, and more.

Scan for harccoalition.org/Resources



More opportunities to connect:

HARC's Weekly Bible Study, Tuesdays at 9 a.m.

Held at **Safron Bakery Café**, 287 Eastern Boulevard North, **Hagerstown**, this is a time for pastors to dig into scripture with other pastors. Typically follows the Lectionary, so it also can help you prepare your sermons a week ahead if you follow the Lectionary cycle. If interested, contact **Kyle Powderly** at acts2024@gmail.com or just show up.

Regular meetings with Hagerstown's mayor

HARC representatives continue to meet regularly with Hagerstown's mayor, to exchange information and ideas on how we can work together to improve our community. The final meeting of 2024 included the outgoing and incoming mayors, as well as the president of the County Commissioners, who plans to join us for future meetings.

Quarterly Faith Leaders Connection

A quarterly opportunity for just faith leaders to connect, build relationships, tackle tough issues as they arise, consider ways we can support one another better, and dream together about ways we can serve the community and our congregations.

HARC welcomes new Board Secretary in 2025

Charlotte Trout has been appointed Secretary of HARC's Board of Directors for a two-year term, beginning January 2025.

Charlotte moved to Washington County in 1982 to begin her career as a science teacher with Washington County Public Schools. After 31 years, she retired, only to take up part-time teaching at

Hagerstown Community College a few years later. Now retired again, she is a leader in her church, Christ's Reformed UCC in Hagerstown. She also volunteers as website manager for HARC. An avid reader, Charlotte enjoys gardening, painting, making jewelry, and creating with yarn and fabric.

The first group of 4K Hikers pause for a group photo before hitting the trail on this picture-perfect Saturday, June 8, 2024.



HARC's BIGGEST FUNDRAISER OF THE YEAR

is its ***Hike for Hunger & Hope*** which has two components: the Main Hike and the Challenge Hike. Proceeds from these two events benefit HARC programs, particularly Micah's Backpack, and this year, the Refugee Welcome Network. *(To learn more about Micah's Backpack, see pages 9-10; the Refugee Welcome Network, pages 12-13.)*

On June 8, 140 people came out to hike 4K, 10K, or half-marathon distances on the scenic C&O Canal Towpath. The weather was perfect and participants enjoyed fellowship, the exploration of nature, and a delicious catered lunch! With the "Virtual Hike" option, another 11 hikers participated at a day and time of their choosing.

On May 18, 18 hardy hikers tackled 20 miles of the Appalachian Trail for our Challenge Hike, which took over 10 hours of hiking on rocky ground! The rainy day didn't dampen anyone's spirit or determination.

This year, we were blessed with a 2-1 fundraising match by God's Grace Fund, so everyone who participated or sponsored a participant helped to make this year's event, by far, our most successful, with more than **\$77,000 in proceeds!** ***Thank you!***



At right, top photo: The Hike is always a fun, family-friendly event!
Bottom photo: Top fundraiser Ed Poling received a quilt made of past years' Hike t-shirts. The quilt was made for HARC by Bradley Brenk.

THE HARC HIKE FOR HUNGER & HOPE



To the hard-working HARC Hike Planning Team: Ed Poling, Beth Johnston, Sue Wert, Ed Maloy, Bill Pike, Kathleen Wood, Kelly Conrad, Kathy Powderly; Butch Eigenbrode and Joe McGuire (with Antietam Radio Association).

To our many wonderful volunteers who give so freely. We could never pull off either of these hikes without your hard work and dedication!

To our Top Fundraising Individuals: Becky Fritts (Challenge Hike), Elizabeth Paul (Main Hike), Ed Poling (overall).

To our Top Fundraising Teams: Otterbein UMC—Micah's Backpack (Challenge Hike); Team Ducey (Main Hike).

To our business and faith community sponsors! Your generous commitment to community inspires us every year. A complete list of Hike Sponsors is under "Donations" at the end of this report.

READY 20
FOR 25

Mark your calendar for our 2025 Hikes!

◆ **MAIN HIKE:**

Saturday, May 31

at Shepherd's Spring Camp & Retreat Center and the C&O Canal Towpath

◆ **CHALLENGE HIKE:**

Saturday, May 17

20 miles on the Appalachian Trail



A special note of deep gratitude to God's Grace Fund. Your generosity and faithful dedication to helping others in our community is uplifting, energizing, and gives us hope!

Challenge Hike warriors

These intrepid souls hiked the Appalachian Trail for more than 20 mountainous miles on May 18.



Thank you to our generous donors:

CORPORATE & FOUNDATION DONORS

\$40,000+

God's Grace Donor Advised Fund
The Marion I. and Henry J. Knott
Foundation

\$20,000 - \$40,000:

Alice Virginia and David W. Fletcher
Foundation
Asian American Center of Frederick (AACF) /
Life and Discovery, Inc.
BCT Cares Foundation, Inc.
Nora Roberts Family Foundation
The Laughlin Family Foundation
United Way of Washington County, MD

\$10,000 - \$20,000

Community Foundation of
Washington County, MD
Jones L. Bowman Foundation Inc.

\$5,000 - \$10,000

The John R. Hershey and Anna L. Hershey
Family Foundation
Mathias Washington County
Charitable Trust

\$2,000 - \$5,000

Redmen Riders Tribe #84
Richard N. Funkhouser Foundation
Richmond Lee Downey Foundation
Soroptimist International of Hagerstown
WCPS Education Foundation

Up to \$2,000

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~ This report was designed by Kelly Z. Conrad ~

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