

A Helping Hand to *Our Community*



ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2022

AUBURN INTERFAITH FOOD CLOSET

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

COVID disrupted many things in our lives. At Auburn Interfaith Food Closet (AIFC), one of the things that was overlooked was the production of the Annual Report for the years 2019 to 2021. To atone for this, this report will cover four momentous years at the food closet. In that time, we've created a permanent home, supported the needs of our guests without missing any day due to COVID, expanded our delivery programs and thrived as an important social service nonprofit agency for Placer County.

This success is due to the blessings of our community. Our core support is derived from 17 faith-based organizations that support AIFC financially and over 240 volunteers that make up our board of directors, leadership, and active day-to-day staff. The broad community of government, businesses and families continually surprises us with financial support. And the blessings of food items - from local stores, food drives, individual donations, and our partner at Placer Food Bank - ensure we achieve our mission to feed the hungry in our midst.

There are families in our community who struggle to make ends meet, and risk having to make painful decisions on how to spend their monthly budget. AIFC continues to make a difference in the lives of these neighbors - through the great support of the community. On behalf of our guests, volunteers, and board ... thank you.

Andy Hayes
President of AIFC



Our Mission
The Auburn Interfaith Food Closet will provide nutritious food to those in need, preserving their dignity and encouraging self-reliance.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Auburn Interfaith Food Closet entered its 25th year of operation in 2022, providing groceries for families and individuals in our community to create 4.7 million meals since opening. Since our inception, the number of family visits to AIFC reflects local economic impacts. Peaking in 2011 as regional unemployment topped 11%, usage dropped during the first stages of COVID as support programs transiently reduced food hardships.

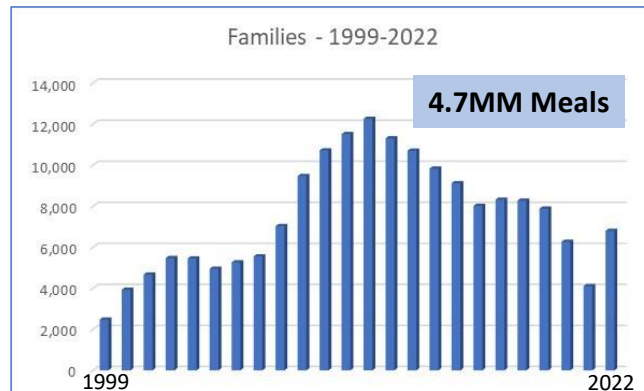


Figure 1: Annual service level since AIFC founding.

In 2019, before COVID hit, this region had a very robust economy with under 3% unemployment. Yet even then, AIFC had nearly 8,000 family visits during the year. This reflects a food insecurity rate for Placer County of 10%, with expectations that it rose to 11% by 2022. Regional prosperity does not ensure everyone in our community can meet all their basic needs.

Over the years, the number of homeless families served by us has been about 10-12% of the total served. The housed families who come to AIFC have diverse situations: working poor with children, young adults working low-wage jobs, retirees outliving their monthly income, individuals living on disability. As monthly expenses exceed income, the groceries we provide stretch the budget a bit - about \$25 per person in the household.

Between April 2020 and July 2021, our guest visits dropped in half as we all lived with COVID. We now know that this drop had multiple causes, including the county adding shelter and meal help for the homeless, various programs putting more money in the hands of needy families, isolation that kept people away and relocation out of the region. But since July 2021, the service numbers increased consistently, with our service level in 2022 rising to twice that of 2021. We believe the end of various COVID support programs and inflation hitting fuel, food and housing costs drove this.

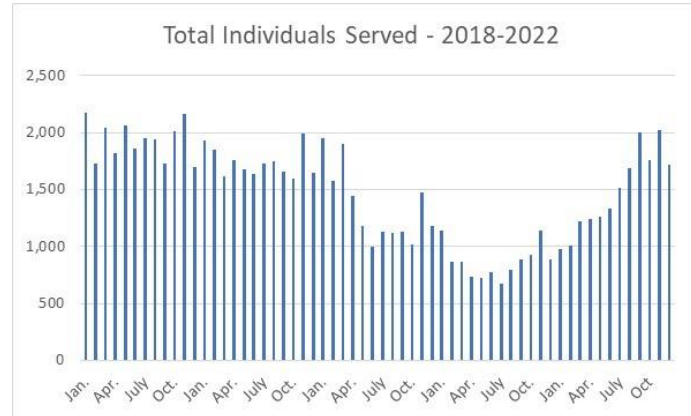


Figure 2: 5-year service levels by month

At present, 11-12% of Placer County residents are estimated to be food insecure. We serve 17 zip-codes, with an aggregate population of 98,000 people. Assuming 12% food insecurity, this projects 10,780 residents living in our communities with some level of food insecurity. In 2022, we hosted 6,757 family visits and 19,419 individuals. Based on an average use of our services 4 times each year, we conclude we touched 45% of the food insecure individuals in our service area in 2022.

We are successful in providing food through our planned fundraising efforts and volunteer support. We continue to manage a 100% volunteer-run agency. Thus over 90% of our expenses directly support guest services. To provide a sense of scale, in 2022 AIFC was:

- a \$412,000 operation based on our annual cash expenditures,
- a \$630,000 operation based on the additional value of donated food disbursements,
- a \$1,200,000 operation based on the added valuation of >25,000 volunteer hours.

Through the wonderful support of the community, we are financially strong. Our overall assets grew 3.4x over this period, driven by building our own facility and carefully managing the donations flowing to us. AIFC has cash reserves that allow us to meet our ongoing annual expenses and plan on new programs to further help the hungry in our region.



FOUR YEARS HIGHLIGHTS

2019

The challenge for 2019 was to continue to raise funds for the new building without siphoning donations from our ongoing program support. In fact, the community responded greatly. By mid-year, our initial capital campaign goal was exceeded and continued to build, while by year-end our operational income exceeded expenses by \$92,792.

Home Delivery Program. AIFC successfully submitted a grant for Community Service Block Grant Funds, administered through Project GO, with the goal to initiate delivery to homebound residents in our -service area in January 2020. The goal of the program was to identify at least 45 very low-income people who were unable to get to AIFC to pick up food during our normal hours. By year end, The Outreach Committee completed plans to recruit and serve these guests.

Building Program. With land purchased in 2017 and agreements with the USDA on a low-interest mortgage, decisions on architect and initial building plans were completed in 2018. Multiple rounds of reviews with the County were completed by year end, but final approvals were not achieved. Yet as we waited, the interest rate for our USDA mortgage dropped from 4.25% to 3.0%, with upside for further reduction. To ensure we could afford this project, we deferred plans for solar power, a fully equipped kitchen, and roller rack system for inventory management; these could be added when additional funding was found.

Food Drives. We depend upon our major partner, The Placer Food Bank, to provide food through The Emergency Food Assistance Program. We augment this through direct food donations from the public, grocery stores and locally produced harvest. Two food drives augment this. In the Spring, AIFC is a beneficiary of the National Association of Letter Carriers program, and in 2019, our share was 3,856 pounds of food picked up by local letters carriers in Auburn. In the Fall, the community is wonderfully generous in supporting our Community Food Drive during Hunger Action Month.

2020

Entering 2020, the expectation was the launch of our homebound delivery program, continued service for those coming to our facility and momentum on the building. All of this was successfully achieved, even with the wrinkle of COVID entering our lives.

COVID

Within days of the start of public policies related to COVID, AIFC was classified as an essential business by Placer County. We faced two challenges: (1) change our service practices to reduce physical interactions while serving our guests, and (2) streamline operations to operate with a reduced volunteer staff. We were able to flip our operations from walk-in to curbside service in one day, with all teams quickly adapting to the new approaches. Proudly, we did not miss a day.

COVID provided many surprises.

The monthly guest levels decreased.

- A portion of this was a reduction in homeless visits, with the county opening additional shelters and providing meals; we dropped from 137 homeless families visits in January to 28 by December.
- Our Home Delivery program successfully launched with 4 families served in January, rising to 47 by year end. This exceeded our goal of 45 families. This was bolstered by people newly homebound due to COVID restrictions.



- Service to housed families who came to our facility for service decreased from 735 families in January to 397 in December. Discounting the home delivery families and homeless in these two months, the net change is 594 to 322 of housed families coming to our facility for served.

The letter carrier food drive was cancelled, and our own Fall food drive was scaled back. We also had several fundraising programs planned by some of our faith committees having to be cancelled. That said, we experienced a large, unsolicited level of support in donations by community businesses and residents. There was a collective belief that more people would need our help for basic living needs. We had some families pass through their stimulus checks. Donations to support our programs rose to nearly \$450,000, up from \$171,000 in 2019.

BUILDING

We received approval from Placer County early in the year, put the project out for bid in the Spring and selected the contractor in May. Funding was locked in, and with a steady decrease in rates, the final \$700,000 mortgage through the USDA was at 2.25%, for 39-years. Ground was broken in July with steady progress throughout the year, meeting the goal to enclose the building before the winter rains began.



2021

This highlight of 2021 was the move into our new facility.

BUILDING

With our core costs covered through donations and the mortgage, we believed we could pursue four deferred items if the additional costs could be covered. A final capital campaign round quickly raised the funds to upgrade a walk-in refrigerator, add the solar system, build out the commercial kitchen and secure a roller rack system to manage nonperishable food inventory. Nearly 60% of these funds came from grants, including funding from Placer County Association of Realtors, Anthem Health, and Placer Shares funding.



Planning the move evolved around the goal to open in the new building without missing a day of service to our guests. Once the roller rack system was installed, inventory was shifted over through volunteers with trailers and pick-up trucks. The last items needed to operate shifted over a mid-June weekend, and we opened for guests on June 21st. The official grand opening occurred in early July.

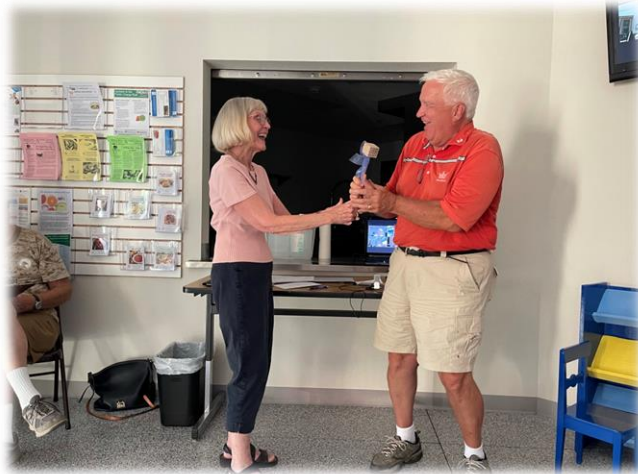
The initial layout of the facility and daily workflows were modified through the experiences and suggestions by the daily teams. The only significant residual frustration is the number of parking spaces on the site, but we were able to have the County re-zone part of the street near the building to allow some spaces. The hotel across the street also has been gracious to allow day-time parking, which works well for our schedules.

COVID

The monthly service levels continued to decrease through July. As seen in Figure 2, July was the deflection point, with monthly guest visits increasing subsequently. With vaccination of our volunteers, many who decided to avoid the risks started to return.

Leadership

After 22 years as president, Sandy Bassett determined that the completion of the new building was a good time to pass the torch. She moved into the Operations Manager role, and Andy Hayes became the 3rd president for AIFC.



Strategic Plan

With these changes, it was felt that we needed to review our current programs and identify meaningful goals. By year end, the draft plan was completed.

New Food Programs

- **Bag Programs.** Two of our supporting churches invited us to join in a program to supply bags of food to the families of students at Rock Creek School, serving a very disadvantaged section of our service area.
- **Staples.** In the past, basic staples, such as cooking oil, flour, sugar, and spices, were provided only if donated. We recognized that these items are a core of healthy meal preparation, so we started a pilot program to stock these, and determine the level of interest. Over 80% of our guests requested items, leading to adding these to our traditional offerings by years end.



- The Home Delivery program had steady support. It remained difficult to recruit more families due to COVID restrictions, but we did achieve a modest increase to an average of 51 families each month. With this, we exceeded our commitment in our grant request of 30 qualifying individuals per month.



2022

In 2022, the total number of guests served surged, doubling by year end compared to 2021. The strategic plan was adopted by the Board in January, with committees formed around each of the five goals. One of these - Reduce Hunger - identified some key opportunities for us to increase guest access and acceptance, in part leading to growth. As COVID risks declined, we were able to expand some of our key projects, hitting record results for our Hunger Action Month Food Drive and the Turkey Drive.

Strategic Plan

The strategic plan development group finalized five key goals, with the plan approved for action by the Board at the January 2022 meeting. Each goal then had a committee beginning to work around the recommendations for action within the plan.

Goal 1. *Reduce Hunger.* Reduction in hunger in our region is possible by two means: (1) serving additional people and (2) doing more for those already coming to AIFC. Through research of our guests and discussions with other agencies serving the same families, a series of changes and additions were introduced in 2022.

- Evening hours. We learned that some families could not come to us during our standard daytime hours. Therefore, we added a second shift on Wednesday, from 4 to 7 pm.
- More food. Our excellent financial position allowed us to increase the amount of food provided for each individual from groceries sufficient for 9 meals up to 12 meals.



- Support of the Latino community. With over 15% of the families in our area being Latino, and an even higher proportion of these being food insecure, multiple steps were taken to improve access of AIFC. We

identified additional bilingual volunteers to better communicate with families, reduced the requirements for registration, added preferred food items and reached out into the community with targeted bag programs.

Goal 2. *Assess AIFC governance.* A subcommittee of the board spent time reviewing best practices for nonprofit boards, especially those with a 100% volunteer model. The immediate focus was on the appropriate board size and structure. It was determined that change is not an urgent need.

Goal 3. *Improve volunteer experiences.* A survey of the volunteers confirmed that there is universal satisfaction. There was no critical need for changes. A volunteer recognition event was held, supported by donations so this was not funded from the AIFC budget.

Goal 4. *Develop the commercial kitchen into a community asset.* We determined we wanted our kitchen to be available for any area nonprofit agency and our supporting churches, to be used to further their own missions. To this end, we developed policies and invested in liability coverages to ensure others could use the kitchen at no expense. We also initiated training programs for guests that revolve around food preparation skills. The first of these was held by year end.



Goal 5. *Develop AIFC plans to respond at time of community crisis, such as regional wildfires.* The 2021 River Fire displaced families around Colfax, which initiated our need to consider the impact of emergency events on area families. A county wide consortium of interested agencies and nonprofits began consideration of forming a VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Assisting in Disasters).

At the time of the Mosquito Fire in the American River Canyon, a complete evacuation of the families living east of the Foresthill Bridge forced over 7,000 people into temporary housing. We provided food for dinner for the first night of evacuation, served over 150 families with food during their time of dislocation, and distributed food support cards once people were back as a mean to introduce us as a continuing service for the residents. In the future, we are ready to loan our kitchen to agencies preparing meals and our refrigerated van to help transport food to the front-line staging camps.

Service Levels

The monthly increase in guest visits that started in July 2021 continued throughout 2022. Many of the government support programs began to unwind, which reduced the effective income for families living at the margin. Additionally, inflation drove higher food, fuel and housing costs which further strained budgets. At year end, we nearly doubled the total guests served compared to 2021, and with the increase in food provision, more than doubled the meal count. As this growth was not accompanied by equivalent increases in free food distributed to us by Placer Food Bank and from our community food drives, we increased our expenditures on food from just under \$39,000 in 2021 to \$158,800 in 2022.

Refrigerated Van

Our program requires us to keep certain perishable food items in a temperature-controlled environment until we hand it to our guests. We started the home delivery program with a grant that covered the costs of renting a refrigerated van for one week each month. In 2022, we needed access to this capacity more frequently, so we decided to invest in a van capable of these deliveries, and to transport food from more stores. The new van was delivered in December.



Community Food and Fun Programs

- **2022 Hunger Action Month Food Drive.** With community restrictions related to COVID reducing, we opted to return to a large community food drive. We set the goal to exceed the highest return and succeeded. Over 15,000 nonperishable food items were collected, through the efforts of over 100 volunteers serving in various roles.



- **2022 Turkey Drive.** Started in 2017, this event inspires the community to donate a turkey to us, which we in turn distribute to families that register. These families are not required to be active guests of AIFC. For each of the 7 years of this program, we've seen an increase in people asking for help. And as a tribute to this community, each year we've had enough turkeys donated to ensure no one was disappointed. Any residual turkeys are then distributed to our guests in December.



- **2022 Walk to Stock the Food Closet.** This fun event is held on Thanksgiving Morning every year. Participants are invited to walk the 5k course laid out around central Auburn, with more motivated participants racing the course for 5k and 10k bragging rights. The resultant donations and participation returned to pre-COVID levels.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Income Expense Performance

| | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Income | | | | | |
| Donations | 163,051 | 171,708 | 449,197 | 358,233 | 342,738 |
| Fundraising | 27,247 | 23,187 | 64,084 | 35,079 | 33,339 |
| Grants | 5,000 | 12,284 | 44,240 | 94,271 | 42,118 |
| Other | <u>0</u> | <u>373</u> | <u>3,071</u> | <u>4,868</u> | <u>373</u> |
| TOTAL | 195,298 | 207,116 | 560,591 | 490,358 | 418,577 |
| Expense | | | | | |
| Admin | 10,955 | 12,183 | 11,508 | 17,233 | 31,207 |
| Building | 0 | 34,954 | 34,065 | 23,187 | 54,237 |
| Fundraising | 3,550 | 8,182 | 7,765 | 7,800 | 8,696 |
| Grants | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2,118 |
| Program | <u>142,455</u> | <u>87,005</u> | <u>58,816</u> | <u>123,934</u> | <u>315,977</u> |
| TOTAL | 153,440 | 114,324 | 112,154 | 173,898 | 412,235 |
| Profit/(Loss) | 41,858 | 92,792 | 448,437 | 316,456 | 6,342 |

Table 1: Operations Income/Expense Performance

Our focus during this period was to ensure our core program operating budget was not impacted by the capital campaign to raise funds for the building. As can be seen, AIFC ended each year with more income than expenses for our overall operations. As noted earlier, there was a significant outpouring of support by the community when COVID hit. Coupled with the significant decrease in guest visits, we had a very large cash surplus in these years.

As seen in the next section, this money is being held now, for future program needs as we find ways to further serve the food insecure residents in our communities.

One metric of a nonprofit is the percentage of expenses that go to direct program services. We calculate this by counting 100% of food costs, 0% of fund-raising costs, and 90% of all other costs as 'program costs'. Applying this formula, 91.5% of our 2022 expenses were direct program costs.

Financial Position

| | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Assets | | | | | |
| Current Assets | 526,278 | 698,882 | 512,402 | 631,543 | 661,800 |
| Building | 185,000 | 358,226 | 1,065,573 | 1,842,847 | 1,822,350 |
| Equipment | 63,327 | 63,125 | 65,760 | 139,062 | 160,530 |
| Cum. Depreciation | <u>(20,979)</u> | <u>(24,803)</u> | <u>(28,825)</u> | <u>(23,511)</u> | <u>(61,307)</u> |
| TOTAL | 751,626 | 1,095,440 | 1,624,910 | 2,589,941 | 2,583,373 |
| Liabilities & Equity | | | | | |
| Liabilities | 6,482 | 25 | 1,992 | 681,731 | 627,174 |
| Equity | <u>745,144</u> | <u>1,095,415</u> | <u>1,622,918</u> | <u>1,908,211</u> | <u>1,956,197</u> |
| TOTAL | 751,626 | 1,095,440 | 1,624,910 | 2,589,941 | 2,583,373 |

Table 2: 5-year Balance Sheet

In this five-year period, we've increased our overall assets by 3.4x, to a total value of \$2,583,373. We now have capital assets of the building and van. We carry a 39-year mortgage with 2.25% interest that has a current residual balance of \$627,174. This represents all of our liabilities. We are obligated to carry \$27,000 as a debt reserve of cash equivalent to one-year mortgage payments. Other than this, the residual Current Assets of \$634,800 are available for our current programs and future expansion to serve more guests.

Guest Service Metrics

| # Served | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Individuals | | | | | |
| AIFC, housed | 21,404 | 19,049 | 15,379 | 10,061 | 16,914 |
| Homeless | 1,719 | 2,087 | 1,155 | 660 | 828 |
| Home Delivery | 0 | 0 | 594 | 837 | 1,677 |
| TOTAL | 23,123 | 21,136 | 17,128 | 11,558 | 19,419 |
| Families | 8,270 | 7,883 | 6,269 | 4,105 | 6,757 |
| Meals | 204,549 | 187,119 | 146,580 | 94,857 | 206,541 |

Table 3: 5-year annual service levels

AIFC focuses on three service metrics: (1) the number of individuals served; (2) the number of families served; and (3) the number of meals that can be prepared with the groceries provided.

Individuals In the pre-COVID period of 2018-2019, we were experiencing declining guest visits, as the local economy set record levels of employment, with unemployment falling below 3%. Our experience is that many people will not use us in months when they can cover all their expenses. After further decrease during the COVID months, the numbers rebounded in 2022.

Families Over the years, the average family size is 2.6 to 2.8 individuals. This average is lower for homeless families and those participating in the home delivery program.

Meals In the last decade, our standard food allotment has been to provide enough groceries to prepare 9 meals for every member of the family. We develop the allotment based on the USDA “My Healthy Plate” nutrition guideline. In early 2022, we increased the food allotment to yield 12 meals for every member of the family. As seen in the chart, our 2022 total meals of 206,541 exceeds any prior year on the chart, evidence we are doing more for those coming to us.



OUTLOOK 2023

2023 Budget

Guest Visit Projections

We enter 2023 with uncertainty of the service levels we anticipate. We recovered the number of monthly visitors to pre-COVID levels by December 2022. Yet we saw month-by-month increases of 7% through the last half of the year. This poses the challenge that our community may be in a volatile period for those living on very narrow budgets and we could exceed pre-COVID visit levels. To that end, we planned our budget around a 2% growth every month, projecting 27% more guests during the year.

Expenses

While all other operating expenses should be similar to 2022, the amount of food that needs to be purchased will increase. In 2022, we purchased \$158,802 of food from various retail and distributor outlets. With 27% more guests, we project a worst-case scenario of food purchases rising to \$388,978. We should be able to reduce this amount by reducing last year's \$2.65 cost per meal. Three factors will achieve this: (1) increasing the food we procure through Placer Food Bank; (2) using our van to procure dairy products from lower cost retail outlets, as we can ensure required temperature control in transit; (3) expanding food donations through additional community awareness.

Income

Our plan projects donations at the 2022 level, with some additional grants. We do not need to immediately initiate more fundraising campaigns. Through the generosity of the donor community, we have over \$660,000 in cash, as seen in Table 2. We can cover all our anticipated costs by tapping into this cash, so we plan to monitor the expense savings before we consider any additional fundraising activities to cover our base operating expenses.

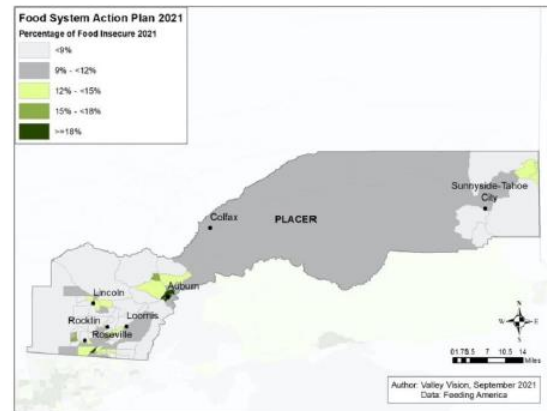
Continued Progress on Strategic Plan

Reduce Hunger

We are ready to serve every person in our service area who has food insecurity.

This figure is a map of estimated food insecurity by neighborhoods of Placer County.¹ Our service area encompasses the central area of this map, with greater food insecure density. Based on our

calculations that we currently touch only 45% of the food insecure individuals, we have more to find and invite to use our services. We are particularly aware that we underserve more remote communities such as Colfax and areas east of there, and Foresthill. We also know that within the immediate Auburn area there are several pockets of >20% food insecurity. There is an AIFC team exploring how we can better reach and serve families in these locations.



Emergency Food Needs.

The 2022 Mosquito Fire required us to invent on-the-fly ways to help those in the community. By the start of the 2023 wildfire risk season, we will have a response plan in place. Hopefully, we can also coordinate this with other agencies.



Use of AIFC Kitchen

Our Nutrition Committee has identified training programs offered through other agencies that focus on cooking, gardening, and nutrition skills. We plan to host at least six programs in 2023 to the public.

Who We Are

Elected Leaders

- President - Andy Hayes
- Vice President - Judie Whitman
- Treasurer - Fran Wheaton
- Secretary - Rich Goss
- Operations Manager - Sandy Bassett

Board of Directors

- Katy Bartosh
- Sandy Bassett
- Joan Beesley
- Pete Clark
- Belva Durel
- Peggy Fleming
- Barbara Ford
- Jeff Garland
- Rich Goss
- Andy Hayes
- Denise Hoffman
- Mary Krebs
- Carol Mulder
- Margaret Platt
- Delores Roberson
- Laurie Soper
- Fran Wheaton
- Judie Whitman
- Don Wilford
- Claudia Wilson



Supporting Faith Based Organizations

Participating

- Auburn Presbyterian Church
- Bethlehem Lutheran Church
- First Congregational Church of Auburn
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- Our Savior Lutheran Church
- Parkside Church of the Nazarene
- Pioneer United Methodist Church
- Sierra Foothills Unitarian Universalists
- St. Joseph Catholic Church
- St. Luke's Episcopal Church
- St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church
- Upper Room Community Church

Associate

- Baha'i Faith of Rocklin
- Faith Lutheran Church, Meadow Vista
- Unity Church

Affiliate

- St. Paul Lutheran Church
- Auburn Grace Community Church



Community Partners

We thrive as an organization through the generosity of those (too numerous to recognize) who donate money and food items to us. We are also helped by local and regional groups - businesses, civic groups, service clubs, schools, farmers, nonprofit agencies, government entities and individuals - whose various types of gifts ensure we achieve our goals.

We are also grateful for the support we receive from:

- **Placer Food Bank** - the regional food network passes through them and we receive significant benefits in program support.
- **Placer Community Foundation** - their support of all the nonprofit agencies in the region, through networking events and free training programs, helps nurture our core. They were on point for disaster relief, looping us in during the Mosquito Fire. And we receive many donations from funds managed through them.
- **Sacramento Regional Community Foundation** - They manage Big Day of Giving, which creates exposure across the region for over 700 nonprofits.
- **Placer Board of Supervisors.**
- **Auburn City Council.**

