



Central Presbyterian Church

DELIBERATELY DIVERSE & FULLY INCLUSIVE

Neighbors Program 2024 Mid-Year Report

2024 has flown by! The Neighbors Program has helped many people during the first two quarters of the year. We continue to operate **Central Mission from 8:00 -11:00 a.m. every Thursday.** In the first six months of 2024, we provided:

Service Provided	Meals	Bus Passes	Clothing	Hygiene Items	Backpacks	Sleeping Bags	Tents
Number of Times Distributed	2,227	108	1,200	1,700 (estimate)	182	49	70



As always, our delicious breakfast served on real plates along with hot coffee in actual mugs, is enjoyed by so many. **We've helped neighbors find jobs, get into shelter, and provided navigation to many critical services around town.**

Coffee and Cookies Was a Success!

This year we tried something new by opening up and offering a Coffee and Cookies program January through March on Tuesday afternoons. This got people out of the cold and gave them a place to talk with friends, socialize, and play games!

Ice Cream Socials in Full Swing!

We began hosting Tuesday **ice cream socials** again this year on June 11th and have served an average of 26 neighbors each week. It has been a great time connecting with neighbors and giving them a break from the heat. A generous donation from *Mission Presbytery* enables us to purchase the supplies each week.

Supplying food year round

Because of our awesome partners, volunteers and donors, we're able to offer snack packs to our neighbors year-round. These contain granola bars, crackers, nuts, and other snacks and are given out when people miss breakfast on Thursdays or when they show up hungry on other days at CPC. Responding to this most basic need is EXACTLY what is needed by CPC downtown.

Community Partnerships

We've maximized our time and capacity by bringing other partners in to serve our neighbors during Central Mission. This year, we've continued our partnership with **Central Health, Medical Access Program (MAP)**. Staff come to Central Mission two times a month, and they have helped **118 people get MAP Cards** and/or referred them to other health care resources so far this year.

We're so thrilled to have started a formal partnership with **Integral Care/Homeless Outreach Street Team** in May. Staff come every week and provide coordinated assessments for housing, help people get into shelter, and offer navigation services.

Support Group and Enrichment

Every Thursday at 10:00 a.m. we gather together with neighbors, church members, and volunteers to offer a support group for our unhoused neighbors. We talk about topics ranging from homeless advocacy to safety on the streets. Some folks have been coming to our group since we started it last year, and others come and go. Because *group therapy/support is a scarce resource* for the unhoused community, we are very glad to offer this to our neighbors.

Occasionally, we take the neighbors on outings. This year, we've been to the Contemporary Austin, The Blanton Museum, the Classic Film Fest at the Paramount, and the Old Emporium Shop and Art Gallery downtown. It's been great to accompany neighbors and get out in the city!

Formalizing and Strengthening Advocacy Citywide

Homeless Advocacy Project: In March, we stepped up our advocacy efforts by initiating a homeless service provider survey to find out needs and direction for the Downtown Cluster group. People expressed the desire for the group to engage in advocacy efforts, so we answered the call. The **Downtown Cluster group** is now called the **Homeless Advocacy Project**. We co-lead this with St. David's Episcopal Church, and have monthly meetings to organize, share information, and speak up with city leaders.

Policy Proposals: CPC's Neighbors Program Manager wrote two policy proposals that were shared with city council members, the mayor's office, and the Homeless Strategy Office, among others. We're working for change by advocating for evidence-based policies with our city leaders. Expanding and strengthening our emergency shelter system and dedicating safe places for people to camp and park their cars would go a long way in helping our unhoused neighbors in crisis.

Speaking out

We've testified at city council meetings, met with state legislators, attended community meetings, and spoke at press conferences. Advocacy is a central part of our work at the Neighbors Program because it is severely lacking in the homelessness arena.

GET INVOLVED: [Volunteer](#) with Central Mission, or [donate](#) to keep our work going!

