



# 2022

## Annual Report

# The Ingenuity, Compassion, and Integrity of Charitable Union

BY PETER PHELPS, BOARD PRESIDENT

These are unprecedented times, especially for not-for-profit organizations like Charitable Union.

We, like you, have been forced to re-align the work we do regarding family and community by prioritizing our resources differently than ever before. But through it all, and thanks in great part to our staff, volunteers, and contributors, we continue the excellent work started 135 years ago of addressing the most pressing needs in our community.

*Each day brings significant new challenges to our operations and to our leadership. We hope you can help us tackle them in three new ways.*

First, consider gifts that are unrestricted for general operations. These will give us the flexibility to address planned and 'un'-planned events that impact our programs and staffing levels.

Second, consider online giving even for events you might or might not otherwise attend. We take our fiscal responsibilities seriously. Due to the pandemic, we've been forced to turn to more virtual fundraising strategies to reach our financial goals without as many in-person events.

Third, be volunteers and advocates for the Charitable Union. Our economy cannot recover if the nonprofit sector is not included as part of recovery efforts. Also, because many of our dedicated volunteers are uncertain of public interactions, their comfort level of involvement working face-to-face has dropped dramatically, which in turn impacts our projects and services. That is why your ongoing support will go a long way in helping Charitable Union meet the every-day demands with renewed ingenuity, compassion, and integrity.

Finally, we cannot express often enough how grateful we are that you stand by us. So, on behalf of the Charitable Union staff, the board of directors, and our volunteers, thank you for continuing to help us provide the *help that brings hope!*

### 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### PETER PHELPS

President  
Retired Bronson B.C. Health

#### ADAM DINGWALL

Vice President  
Retired from B.C. Family YMCA

#### ANN BAKKER

Treasurer & Secretary  
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#### TIZIANO BONARDI

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#### RACHEL MORELAND

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#### DIANE RAMIREZ

Retiree from Chemical Bank

#### CHUCK SAULSBERRY





Director  
Calhoun County

### CHARITABLE UNION

85 Calhoun St  
Battle Creek, MI 49017  
(269) 964-7234  
[www.CharitableUnion.org](http://www.CharitableUnion.org)

 @charunion

 @charitableunion

Don't Let  
**Periods**   
 Take You  
 Out!   
 

**FREE** monthly supply  
 available at Charitable Union.

You are not alone.  
 We are here  
 to help.

**TAMPONS  
 PADS  
 DEPENDS**

Our Free Store offers your family  
 the opportunity to shop for your  
 needs. From clothing to bedding  
 and everything in between.

**FREE STORE HOURS**  
 Mon - Wed 9:00-4:00  
 2nd Sat 9:00-12:00



# Our Roots

BY TERESA ALLEN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

*The year was 1887.*

The 'ladies of social responsibility' noticed children loitering on the streets of Battle Creek during the school day. Knowing the children would not be successful if they missed classes, they asked them why they didn't attend. The women learned that the children were embarrassed of their clothing, and this kept them from attending school.

They decided to hold a community dance to raise funds to make and mend clothing for the children of Battle Creek. On January 21, 1887, they held the 'Grand Charity Ball' and raised \$232.75!

Charitable Union was quickly created. Soon after Union Home, the first hospital would be established. The administration of the hospital would be a part of Charitable Union's work for the next 50 years. Additionally, we were the administrator of the nursing school that supported the hospital.

We have pivoted to best serve the needs of our community for the past 135 years and we are looking forward to what the future holds! Charitable Union is the oldest continually operating charitable organization in Battle Creek!

## What Started with COVID is now a Necessity

BY NICOLE

When we reopened in May 2020 it was necessary to have storage pods to hold donations, to ensure we limited our risk of exposure to COVID. We were sure we would only need them for a short time. That was three years ago.

*Today the pods have become a necessity  
 to the work we provide.*

Space has always been a rare commodity for us and having the ability to house donations safely in those pods has become a priceless 'gift.'

We look forward to the day when things return to normal, pods are not necessary to hold donations, and we can tell the new employees about 'how we used to store donations in the parking lot.' But until this time comes, please pardon us for being short staffed.

### Mission & Values

#### OUR PURPOSE

To contribute to human dignity.

#### OUR WORK

Provide clothing, bedding and small house charge and connect people to resources

# Deodorant Shouldn't be a Privilege

BY RUTH

*Hygiene poverty is 'not being able to afford many of the everyday hygiene and personal grooming products most of us take for granted.'*

The reality of low income is that it restricts peoples' options, leaving them caught between being able to heat their homes, pay the rent, eat or be clean. This disproportionately impacts the homeless within our community. They cannot afford to purchase things like deodorant and soap.

None of us enjoys being with someone whose hygiene is not quite up to our standards. But our standards aren't always able to be met. This year, 14% of those we served are experiencing homelessness.

Charitable Union provides hygiene kits to the homeless population. Each year we hand out an average of 670 kits. But the reality is that does not always provide for those who are not homeless, but who also struggle to have what is needed to have good hygiene.

*Do you travel? Think about taking the hotel soap, shampoo, and lotion to donate!*



## I got the Job!

BY CYNDI

One of my most gratifying jobs is to check in a person who needs steel-toed boots. Why? It signals that someone is beginning a new job, a new start to possibly moving out of poverty.

Here's how it works. Person applies for a job with a temp agency. Person gets the job! Person is not able to start the job until they get steel-toed shoes. Temp agency refers the new hire to Charitable Union. We sign them up for our services, but most commonly, they only need the shoes to start their job.

I wish them the best of luck in their new position and silently hope that they will be successful. It is gratifying knowing that maybe this will be the impetus they need to propel them out of the cycle of poverty.

*So far this year we have given away 623 pairs of steel-toed boots.*

Have an old pair of steel-toed boots with a little life left in them? We would take them as a donation.



### OUR VALUES

hold items at no  
in the community.

Honor and respect the people we serve. Collaborate and partner with stakeholders. Respect diversity within our community. Be an exemplary organization. Use resources responsibly.

# Helping Hands

BY KIP

Our work does not happen without the support of our volunteers. From sorting donations, to hanging clothes, to making all the beautiful items in our Gift Shop. The number of volunteers is still down compared to pre-Covid. This means we have added additional staff positions and staffing hours to keep up.

*It is important to our small team that we serve as many families as possible.*

But we need your help! Please think about spending an hour or two a week – you will make a big difference at Charitable Union.

## Want to help?

We need your talent!

- Sewers, Quilters, Knitters, and Crocheters
- Help with Fundraisers
- Data Entry
- Maintenance
- Special Events
- Community Outreach
- Sorting and Hanging Clothing
- Help at our Donor Door



(269) 964-7234

[www.CharitableUnion.org](http://www.CharitableUnion.org)



@charunion



@charitableunion

# Have a Collection of Old Shirts?

BY TERESA

What are you going to do with that collection of old t-shirts? We can take those shirts and create a custom t-shirt quilt. Let me tell you about mine! When my youngest graduated from high school, I wanted to 'retire' all of my school apparel (it was a large collection). But I hated the idea of never seeing it again, so I had my 'mom quilt' made! I love the transformation of my old shirts into a beautiful quilt.

Let us take your special memories and make them into a keepsake!



Charitable Union helps those on their journey out of poverty.

## Infants

### Layettes

start mothers off right by the nurturing example

### Formula

protect growing brains with supplemental formula

### Diapers

maintain proper hygiene for better health

### Children's Books

stimulate growing brains with language and concept exposure

### Clothing

onesies to toddler, shoes to coats

## Adults

### Work Wear

steel-toed shoes, business suits, and scrubs

### Personal Hygiene Kits

making ends meet shouldn't mean you sacrifice your health

### Housewares

pots and pans, bed and kitchen linens, end tables, décor, lamps, etc.

### Literature

contemporary soft and hard cover books, eclectic reference manuals, etc.

### Formal-Event Wear

funeral, interview, and wedding attire

## School-Age Kids

### Back-to-School Clothing

help kids dress for success

### Winter Weather Gear

keep kids warm on their way to and from school, while outside, and exercising

### Storybooks

help kids explore their interests and expand their vocabularies

### Period Poverty

no girl should have to skip school because she doesn't have product when she needs it

### Prom Dresses

every girl should experience this right of passage

## Seniors

### Incontinence Materials

our bodies break down, humiliation at it shouldn't be a thing

## Homeless

### Weather Appropriate Gear

heavy-duty clothing, tents, sleeping bags, cooking vessels, etc.

## Disaster Recovery

### Fire Victims

clothing, bedding, towels, dishes, and small kitchen appliances to those who suffered a house fire

## Want to give?

Consider shopping from our store [The Gift Shop](#) on [Etsy](#) or choose [Charitable Union](#) as your charity on [Amazon Smile](#).

## The Gift Shop



[@CharitableUnionGift](#)

Shop [The Gift Shop](#) on [Etsy](#)

[smile.amazon.com](#)

Choose [Charitable Union](#) as your Charity on [Amazon Smile](#) and 0.5% of all your purchases will be donated!



Like & Follow Us!

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# Make a Difference

BY DIANE

As a grassroots nonprofit we fundraise annually to support our entire operating budget. It is very rare that we write a multi-year grant (we have our first this year). What a multi-year grant allows us to do is PLAN. Plan for next year's program and how we will grow and improve it. Sometimes we do not secure the necessary funds to keep a program fully operational, that means we move the program to a 'donation basis only' where families seeking that service may be turned away because we do not have their size.

*One thing that is extremely helpful for us while planning our program is recurring donations.*

This can be weekly, monthly, or quarterly donations. This allows us to know when to anticipate donations and allows us to plan our programs accordingly.

You can set-up a recurring donation on our website or contact our office and we can assist you.



*Providing Help that Brings Hope has never been easier!*

Scan the QR code to visit our website and donate today!



## Did You Know?

BY CYNDI SUTTON, RELIEF CLERK

One of the easiest ways you can support the Charitable Union is to save your **Family Fare** and **D&W Fresh Market receipts** and turn them in to us when you stop by to donate clothing or shop at The Gift Shop @ Charitable Union. We just turned in our fourth collection of \$150,000 worth of receipts. Will you help us to our fifth collection?

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Come Join Us!*  
You can help support our mission in 2023.

**DECORATED TABLE** IT'S BACK!

**2023**

**JEANS DAY**

FOR CHARITABLE UNION

**JANUARY 25TH, 2023**

**\$5**

Contact [info@charitableunion.org](mailto:info@charitableunion.org) if interested in running an event at your organization!



*Charitable Union Recycles on Average 200,000 lbs. of Unusable Clothing Each Year, Keeping it Out of Landfills!*