



CHESTER EASTSIDE, INC.
at St. Paul's Episcopal Church
301 East 9th Street
Chester, PA 19013

Rev. Zuline Gray Wilkinson, M.Div., MSW, Executive Director
John Mackey, Chairman
Rev. William North, Vice-Chairman
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Chester Eastside, Inc. (CEI) has been proudly serving the city and its residents for the last 35 years. Similar to other non-profits, it faces the seemingly endless struggle of budgets, reporting guidelines and securing the funding needed to maintain its work. As a result, it is making a course correction in an effort to emphasize the most important aspects of its outreach.

As of March 11, CEI is open three days a week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday) with a part-time staff. The agency is adjusting its programs to operate on the revised schedule.

The streamlining allows CEI to preserve its focus on nurturing children and feeding the hungry. The Phoenix After School Program will continue to provide homework assistance, mentoring, physical activity, exposure to the arts and healthy nutrition education. On select Fridays, students will be involved in enrichment activities like gardening and robotics.

CEI will also maintain its food ministry, especially as more city residents face food insecurity. The agency will continue to provide more than 120,000 meals each year through its Hunger Safety Net, an income-based program where eligible families receive enough bagged food to provide each member with three meals a day for five days; Emergency Food, offering food to anyone who expresses a need, regardless of income, and Meals Pantry, which serves hot, nutritious lunches.

As CEI restructures, it will rely on its major donors, including DIFAN (Delco Interfaith Food Assistance Network), the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey and Presbytery of Philadelphia; organizations such as Foundation for Delaware County and Uncommon Individual Foundation; grants and the many local churches which offer financial and volunteer support. CEI is also exploring opportunities for partnering with other community organizations in continuing its mission.

The challenge is not the first which CEI has faced. Founded as a ministry of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, it served the community of Chester from Third Presbyterian Church until 2012 when the aging facility could no longer house the agency's programs. However, the agency was invited to St. Paul's Episcopal Church which is now the agency's headquarters.

In 2014, CEI became an independent 501(c) 3 to help diversify its sources of support in order to broaden its reach in the community. Despite the physical and organizational upheaval, all of its programs expanded and flourished.

Despite the current changes, CEI's programs will operate with the same quality that has been its hallmark. It strives each day to create a welcoming and inclusive environment that encourages and enables the community to achieve its goals and aspirations while promoting the core values of integrity, peace, social justice, love and respect. Chester Eastside, Inc. will continue to concentrate on making positive contributions to the city's present and its future.

" Chester Eastside, Inc., in accordance with Federal law and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. "