

2024-2025



TRUE CHARITY®

# Annual Report ▶

---

Network Size and Impact

Member Content

Community Engagement

Summit

Reach

Fundraising and Sustainability



## LETTER FROM THE CEO

---

It's with a great sense of gratitude and hope that I note the True Charity Network has reached its milestone five-year anniversary. Launched as a local initiative in 2020, it now consists of almost 300 charity organizations, signaling both stability and a great stride taken for the effective charity movement. It's empowered by a team of staff, volunteers, church and nonprofit leaders committed to the resurgence of civil society's role as first responder to poverty. Indeed, the Network moves forward with a bold vision of communities across America energized and empowered with the tools they need to provide real opportunity for millions to escape its grasp.

Shay and Wendy need it because they've reached a much different five-year mark, having lived in a

homeless encampment in Alabama for at least that long. When I first met them, Shay's candidness about the stream of relief being delivered to the camp shocked me. "I wish they'd quit bringing so much stuff here," he said, "It just makes us lazy." The proof is in the pudding: Even now, they're waiting on a government housing voucher (number 38 on the waiting list) and Shay is waiting on his disability.

Their experience illustrates what a growing number of us realize: Streams of private relief and the promise of public relief relieves people of dignity, personal responsibility, and the motivation to capitalize on opportunity. That problem has only strengthened our resolve to compel policy leaders, donors, and practitioners to quit the business of relief.

Surprisingly, that was FDR's message in his 1935 State of the Union address. He said, "The federal government must and shall quit this business of relief" and added, "To dole out relief in this way is to administer a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit." Sadly – and much to the detriment of Shay, Wendy, and millions more mired in poverty — the government has not quit the relief business.

In fact, the programs spawned by FDR's New Deal and compounded by those of LBJ's Great Society have transitioned America from the Great Depression to the Great Dependency. Nearly two-thirds of those dependent on anti-poverty programs are not in poverty, the male labor force participation rate is at a record low, and per capita welfare transfers (in normalized dollars) are more than 1000% greater than during the depression.

But I have great hope. Organizations in our Network have joined the fight by transforming their charitable practices from providing relief to provisioning opportunity. These

inspiring leaders are enabling a growing number of the poor with a second chance to regain agency, dignity, and a path to prosperity. I'm inspired by their work and that of the True Charity team who serves them. I trust you will be, too, as you read of their accomplishments during last year.

Yes, America climbed out of the Great Depression and fell into the Great Dependency. But I believe we've entered a season that — if we steward it well — could be the beginning of a new era God ushers in. For Shay, Wendy, and all of us, let's pray He graciously leads us into it ... an era I like to call the Great Opportunity!

***For Charity and Liberty,***

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Whitford', with a stylized, flowing script.

**James Whitford**  
**CEO and Co-Founder**  
**True Charity**

# Network Size and Impact▶

---

The True Charity Network is a coalition of like-minded nonprofits and churches that serve people in poverty. Through True Charity's practical resources, video training, and pragmatic connections, True Charity Network members develop relational, empowering programs that truly help their neighbors flourish.

# TESTIMONIALS



*"True Charity is the best resource for helping the practitioners I work with in Chicago and St. Louis to shift their programs away from toxic charity and to a more dignifying model. This is what I want to promote through my work at the Free Enterprise Center."*

**—Rachel Ferguson, Free Enterprise Center at Concordia University, River Forest, IL**



*"After not seeing the desired outcomes in our adult mentoring program over a span of 2 years, we used True Charity's Mentoring MAP to revamp/tweak our adult mentoring program. Our staff now works with clients who are ready to be mentored and who are truly desiring to grow and escape poverty. Based on our daily interactions, we have seen success in mentoring relationships that are currently taking place."*

**—Jon Barrett, Executive Director, CVCCS, Lancaster, PA**

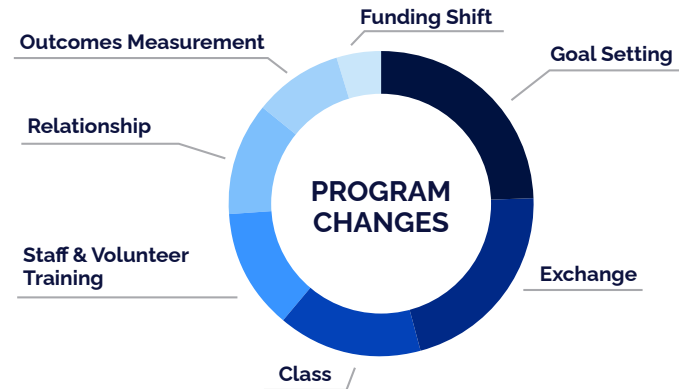
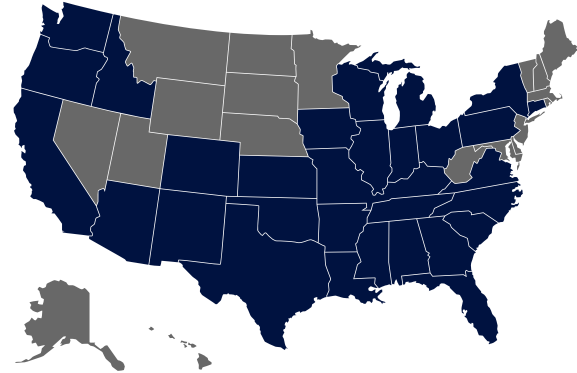


*"We love, love, love True Charity! There is no equal in the US!! TC is easy to share and is almost always well received. I appreciate the new MAPS & Tool kits that continually are published and easy to access. It keeps us encouraged & helps us work smarter not harder."*

**—Rachel Luebbering, Resource Coordinator, SW MO Coalition of Charities, Purdy, MO**

# Metrics:

- **89** new member organizations gained
- **248** member organizations influencing communities in **35** states
- **1300+** individuals have access to the member portal, which houses our video training, program guides, resource partner discounts, organizational toolkits, opportunities for legislative impact, and more.
- **34** resource partners like Alliance Defending Freedom, The Chalmers Center, and Protect My Ministry offer beneficial services and significant discounts to our coalition.
- **62%** of network organizations have made significant changes to their programs and/or organizations since joining the network.
- **1 million+** individuals served annually by True Charity's Network



# Member Content ▶

---

True Charity's educational resources are designed to shape a deeper understanding of effective poverty alleviation. Beyond discussing the philosophy behind effective charity, we provide plans with clear, actionable steps to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

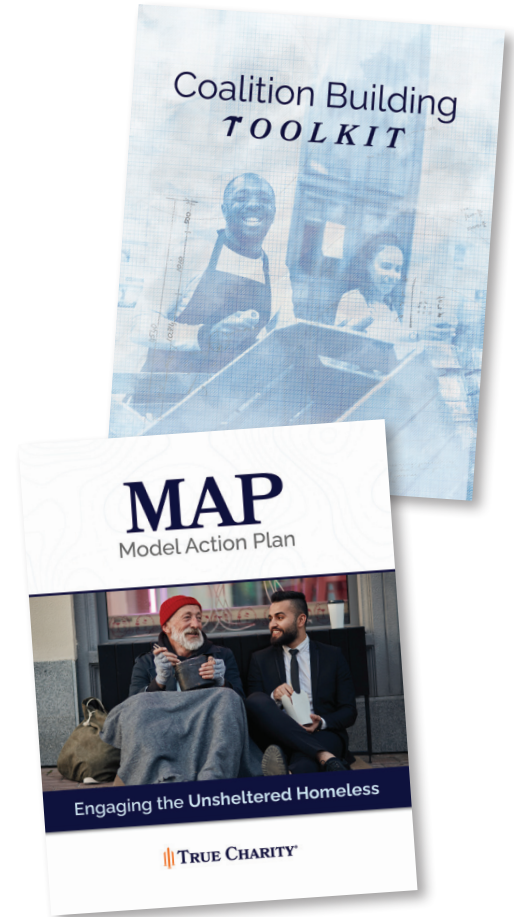
# What's new?

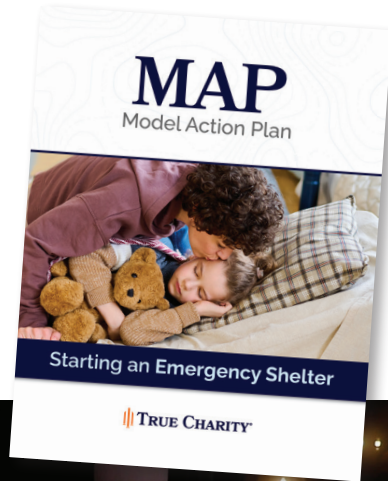
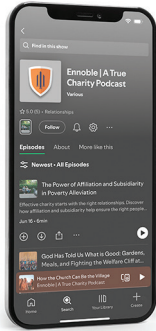
In addition to existing resources, such as Staff and Volunteer Training videos, a brimming program plan library, webinars, the recommended programs and classes database, and online courses, we've recently introduced the following:

**Free Trial Membership:** Interested nonprofit or church leaders can enjoy the benefits of True Charity Network membership by enrolling in a 2-week trial of the member portal.

**Coalition Building Toolkit:** Our newest toolkit equips you to build a collaborative network of aligned community organizations committed to ensuring the maximum number of individuals transition out of poverty. From videos to actionable documents, this toolkit has everything you need to pilot an effective charity coalition in your community.

**Engaging the Unsheltered Homeless Model Action Plan:** Despite a growing number of shelter beds and more funding than ever, the homeless crisis is worsening. This MAP provides step-by-step guidance for nonprofits and churches on how to build relationships with and connect homeless individuals to the next step on their journey toward flourishing lives.





**Emergency Shelter Model Action Plan:** Programs that prioritize case management, healthy relationships, and mutual exchange can be transformative for individuals experiencing homelessness. This MAP equips organizations to design emergency shelters that integrate these key elements, making them a vital first step toward traditional or permanent-supportive housing.

**Member Orientation:** Every month, new and existing members can get acquainted with the resources on the member portal, meet fellow network members, and strategize their next steps using the Path to Effective Charity "Quiz." Attendees also set a specific action-step before they leave the meeting.

**Ennoble Podcast:** This podcast adds a listening option to our monthly articles. It explores effective charity practices and policies, focusing on strategies and success stories in poverty alleviation and empowering people. We celebrated 75 episodes and 5,000 downloads this year!

We hosted eight webinars in the last fiscal year covering a wide range of issues, including:

- Legal Compliance: What Every Nonprofit Leader Needs to Know
- 2024 Government Policy Forum
- Overcoming Staff Resistance to Program Change
- Can Innovation Solve Poverty?
- Defend Your Religious Liberty with Strong Governing Docs
- Starting a Mentoring Program: Design for Ministries and Nonprofits
- Turn Your Nonprofit or Church Website into a Donor and Volunteer Magnet
- Reaching the Unsheltered Homeless: Tips for Impactful Outreach Programs

"True Charity has offered a treasure trove of knowledge to glean from as we build our Life Preservation Program. The Model Action Plans have helped change an overwhelming task into a step-by-step process leaving no stone unturned. The Residential Life Transformation MAP has been extremely helpful. I've particularly loved the Tips from a Veteran section and reading how others dealt with certain pieces that I have questioned myself."

*—Restore Family  
Preservation Center*

# Community Events

**4** community workshops in three different states (MO, GA, WI)

**8** other educational events in 4 states (MO, GA, MI, FL)

**536** total participants

**197** total organizations represented

**18** Network joins post-event

Community Event participants are saying:

"This workshop is absolutely essential for anyone involved in charity work."

"After attending the Live Outcomes Measurement Training, I have gained a deeper understanding of what outcomes actually are and the tools to help me determine and measure outcomes for my organization."

# Ambassador Program

True Charity Ambassadors are passionate connectors who champion effective charity in their communities. Through training with the True Charity team, Ambassadors are equipped to point people to True Charity's practical ideas and resources that help nonprofits and churches collaborate, implement best practices, and achieve long-term results.

In FY 25, we trained 9 new ambassadors, bringing the total number of ambassadors to 28. Five of the 9 new ambassadors have hosted a Community Workshop or other educational event.

Thanks to their efforts, 36 new members in FY25 and 71 total come from Ambassador communities!

"Becoming a True Charity Ambassador has given me both the confidence and the resources to speak with community members and organizations about the important issues related to the good work of addressing poverty. True Charity helps me move beyond agreement in principle to practical ways to effect changes in practice within a church or non-profit."

—Jim Ott, JMO Services,  
Dubuque, IA



TRUE CHARITY  
SUMMIT

The True Charity Summit is an annual gathering for charity practitioners from nonprofits and churches nationwide seeking best practices of effective charity. This design was intended to fill in critical gaps we have broadly observed in the poverty alleviation space: many charity practitioners are uninformed of charity best practices, lack practical resources to help them do their best work, and are disconnected from others in this space.

This was the first year that we took the Summit on the road! We hosted the event in Huntsville, AL, and The Chalmers Center partnered with us in leading a pre-event intensive. Their visionary founder and the co-author of *When Helping Hurts*, Dr. Brian Fikkert, presented as one of our keynote speakers for 2025.



268 attendees  
FROM 121 organizations  
IN 30 states

# Reach▶

---

In our mission to transform charity, measuring our impact is crucial. This section highlights the expansive reach of True Charity and the communities we've touched over the past year. From our workshops to ambassador programs, every initiative plays a vital role in equipping churches and nonprofits with the tools they need to serve effectively. Join us as we share key metrics that showcase our collective efforts in addressing poverty across the nation.

# Digital Marketing

**3,137** social media followers

**678.3K** social media reach

		
16.3K	650.1K	11.9K

**2,873** subscribers on our email list

37.4% average email open rate

# Fundraising & Sustainability▶

---

Sustainable funding is essential for driving our mission forward. This section outlines our fundraising achievements over the past year, illustrating the growing support from our community and key foundations. We appreciate our donors who provided for 82% percent of our budget, allowing us to provide affordable membership fees for smaller ministries.



**\$947,132**

total funding raised

**35%**

increase in funding

**19%**

increase in number of gifts

**20%**

increase in avg. gift size

"True Charity equips nonprofits and communities to replace transactional aid with transformational relationships. It's a movement rooted in freedom, accountability, and the belief that every person has something to contribute... Having grown up in poverty and seeing what the federal and state handouts do to destroy (even though it's with a huge heart and good intentions), and having been in federal accounting and seeing the ever growing and unsustainable dependency driven programs, I highly recommend supporting this organization!"

—R.J. BLAKE, CPA, CGFM

## SUPPORT FROM KEY FOUNDATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS:



**Richard and  
Ethelyn Haworth**



**The Farber  
Foundation**





TRUE  
CHARITY

Real compassion. Real results.

[truecharity.us](https://truecharity.us) | 705 E 15<sup>th</sup> St, Joplin, MO 64804 | 417.202.8030