

Charlotte CROP Hunger Walk Why We Walk

The Charlotte CROP Hunger Walk seeks to educate, inspire and empower the Charlotte community to be agents of change in the fight against poverty and hunger through fundraising events with local and international impact. This is Charlotte's original multi-denominational, multi-generational, multi-cultural event. The Walk is an opportunity for Charlotte residents of all ages, faiths, cultures and circumstances to join together to demonstrate their concern for those who are poor and do not have enough food to eat, both across the globe and in our own backyard. The Charlotte CROP Hunger Walk is the largest CROP Walk in the country in both the number of people who participate and the amount of funds raised. This year, our cumulative total since 1978 will go over \$8 million with over \$2 million staying here in the Charlotte community.

Charlotte is a wonderful place to live. We have great people here. You can see it for yourself on Sunday, October 18th at 2:30pm in Independence Park when thousands of local residents will spend part of the afternoon together for the 37th annual Charlotte CROP Hunger Walk. The Walk is 3.6 miles winding through the edge of uptown and the Belmont neighborhood. The length represents the average distance people in third world countries must walk to obtain clean water. Some of us walk because our family, friends and or co-workers are walking. Some of us will walk because when we personally experienced tough times, one of the local agencies benefitting from the walk---Crisis Assistance Ministry, Loaves & Fishes, and Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina--- helped us out. And some of us will walk as a show of support for people across the globe who don't have access to enough food or clean water because we are grateful to be blessed with enough of both.

Hunger is a serious problem in our world, in our nation, and right here in our own community of Charlotte. It has recently been in the news that Charlotte is the number two city in the nation after Baltimore for children in poverty to remain in poverty as adults. Poverty is the leading cause of hunger. There are over 155,000 people in Mecklenburg County who live at or below the poverty level and are at risk of hunger. Over one third of these individuals are children. The poverty level is \$24,250 for a family of four. A single parent with one child making minimum wage, \$15,080/year, is living below the poverty level of \$15,930 for a two person household. People in need in Charlotte are often helped by Crisis Assistance Ministry, Loaves & Fishes and Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina, the three local agencies receiving funds from the Charlotte CROP Hunger Walk.

Access to clean water---something we often take for granted---is at the heart of Church World Service sponsored CROP Walks across the country. CWS believes there is enough food, water and justice for everyone in the world. Their work centers around building alliances among faith groups, advocates and those in need to provide impactful programs and services. In the past year alone, CWS has made a difference in the quality of life for tens of thousands of individuals in over 30 countries.

Poverty and hunger are issues threatening the quality of life for people in our local and global communities. You can help. Join us for the Charlotte CROP Hunger Walk. Sign up at www.charlottecropwalk.org today.

www.charlottecropwalk.org

Loaves & Fisheswww.loavesandfishes.org

Loaves & Fishes, will celebrate 40 years of helping Charlotte neighbors in need in September. Since 1975, Loaves & Fishes has provided groceries to Charlotte's residents in need when income does not cover the necessary expenses of food, housing, utilities, transportation and medical care. In 2014, Loaves & Fishes distributed 1.65 million pounds of groceries to serve 78,602 individuals in need including 37,743 children. Over 50% of the people helped said they would use the money saved to pay rent or utilities. During the past 40 years, Loaves & Fishes has helped over 1.7 million Charlotteans when they needed it most.

Crisis Assistance Ministrywww.crisisassistance.org

Like Loaves & Fishes, Crisis Assistance Ministry also celebrates 40 years of service to the Charlotte community this year. Despite the drop in the unemployment rate, thousands of Mecklenburg County families continue to struggle to cover basic needs of housing, utilities and food. In 2014, Crisis Assistance Ministry helped 17,354 households with emergency financial assistance in the form of rent and utility payments. Another 10,216 families received household goods and clothing. And 2771 families were helped with furniture and appliances.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolinawww.secondharvestmetrolina.org

SHFBM has served the Metrolina region since 1984. Last year, the Food Bank distributed over 45 million pounds of food and household items through 650 partner nonprofit agencies in 19 counties. These agencies include emergency food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, low income daycares and senior programs. Over 17 million pounds distributed were meat, dairy and produce, the foods most needed but least affordable by people in need and at risk of hunger. Distributing 45 million pounds equates to the Food Bank distributing 327 pounds per minute during every hour it is open.

Church World Servicewww.cwsglobal.org

CWS Global was founded in 1946 and is a cooperative ministry of 37 Christian denominations and communions affiliated with the National Council of Churches in the United States. CWS Global provides sustainable self-help, development, disaster relief, and refugee assistance around the world. The CWS mission is to eradicate hunger and poverty and to promote peace and justice at the national and international level through collaboration with partners abroad and in the US. CWS Global sponsors 1300 CROP Hunger Walks across the US with approximately 116,000 walkers raising over \$12 million to fight hunger and poverty in international and local communities.

