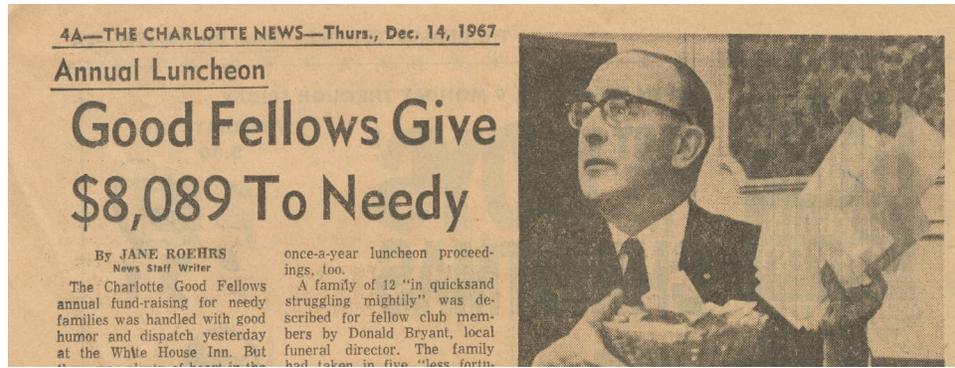
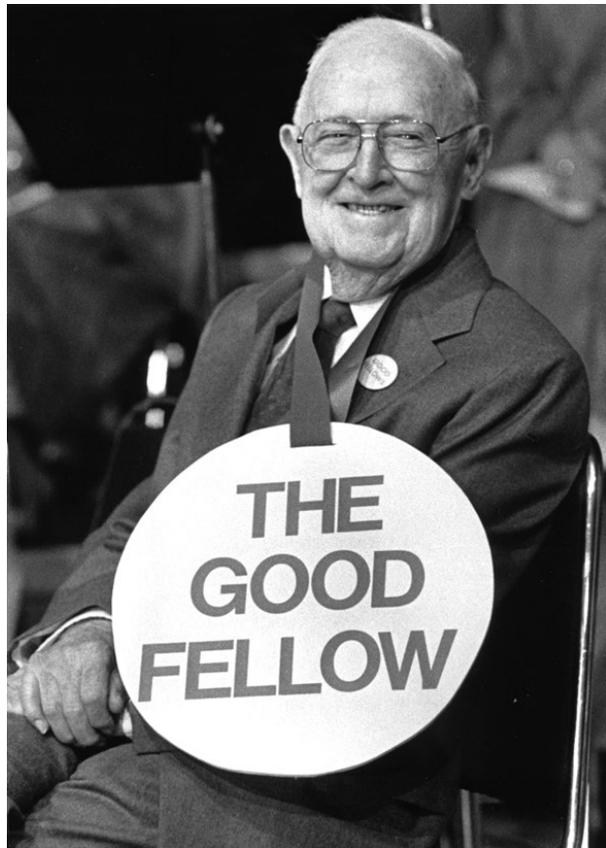




The Good Fellows Club

A legacy of serving those in need

The Good Fellows Mission



The mission of the Good Fellows Club is to give a “hand up” with emergency financial assistance to working families and individuals within our community. The generous donations from our members are used to help those during a time of crisis with their rent or utility bill.

History and Background

The Good Fellows Club was founded in 1917 by a group of men at the Second Presbyterian Church and has been helping those in need in the Charlotte community with emergency assistance ever since. In existence for over 100 years, the Good Fellows Club works to prevent homelessness by assisting with the past-due rent of working families and individuals in danger of eviction.

We currently have a membership of 1,600 men who gather annually for a Christmas luncheon and meeting to enjoy fellowship, music, and most importantly, raise \$2,000,000 for those in crisis in our area. We help more than 1,600 families every year with rental assistance.

100% of donated dollars at the annual Christmas luncheon and meeting go directly to helping families in the Charlotte area. Administrative costs are covered by membership dues which are \$150.00 paid annually.

Applications for Good Fellows assistance come from authorized referring partner agencies within our Charlotte community. We work closely with the Department of Social Services, Mecklenburg County, CMS, and Atrium Health social workers, as well as the Goodwill Opportunity Campus Basic Needs Specialists.

The administrative office of the Good Fellows is located in the Belmont Regional Neighborhood Center.

Those empty pockets mean Good Fellows care

The annual Good Fellows luncheon is a lively affair, a social event, one of Charlotte's oldest Christmas traditions.

It's also one of the best. It is good not just for what it means.

The club goes back to 1919, when David Owens reorganized the old Men's Benevolent Society.

Since then, the membership has grown from a handful to 700, all of whom pay \$25 in dues each year for the privilege of giving their money away.

Over 600 of them — more than ever before — came to the Sheraton Center yesterday to do just that.

Their's is a special style of giving, and there were so many clamoring to give their money away they had to set up extra tables in order to feed them all.

Money certainly isn't the symbol



steve snow

It's the only time the Good Fellows ever meet, and they meet only for the purpose of giving.

And they give generously. Yesterday, they gave well over \$25,000, the most ever given.

The \$25,000 they gave last year went to help 850 needy Charlotte families.

And all the giving takes place in about 10 minutes.

It starts with three speakers, each with three minutes to tell the others of the plight of a family.

And Vest told of the widow who has multiple sclerosis and five children.

Myers told of the family of 10 who lives in abject poverty and has so little food the parents have to keep a lock on the refrigerator door to keep the children out.

He quoted Russian author Dostoevski, who said: "There is no crime . . . there is no sin . . . there is only hunger."

"Our greatest crime, our greatest sin, is the hunger of these children, just 2½ miles from here," Myers said. "The sadness to me came when I looked into the eyes of those children, those listless eyes, and I wanted to take them by the shoulders and shake them and say, 'You will end up like your parents, you have no chance . . . you have no future.'"

The men then vote to see which family should receive assistance.

among the Good Fellows collecting the checks.

It sounds like an auction, with people yelling the amounts from all over the room.

"I've got \$200 for the Vest case."

"\$100 over here."

"Who's got \$500?"

"\$550 over here in the back."

"\$1,000? thank you. Who's next? We want every bit of money from you people."

But the money is only part of the story.

The other part is what the giving means: through their giving they help many poor people who need the help, but they also reflect the kind of compassion Charlotteans show for each other and their community, for this is a city of sharing people.

After the money's collected, the Good Fellows chorus and a guest opera soloist sing some songs, and



Operations



Executive Director – Betsy Zarzour

The Executive Director assists the board in fulfilling the Good Fellows mission by overseeing the budget, annual meeting, membership, and sponsorships throughout the year.

Director of Family Services – Christine Demaine

The Director of Family Services corresponds with the social workers who refer families in need of rental assistance during a time of crisis. All applicants are screened and approved by Christine Demaine for financial assistance.

Leadership

Club Presidents

David Owens	1919-1957
Colonel Pease	1957-1987
Larry Tomlinson	1987-2004
Bill White	2004-2009
Frank Dowd	2010-2016
Mac Everett	2017-2019
Stick Williams	2020-2022
Peter A. Pappas	2023-2025



Board of Directors

The Board is comprised of twenty-four community leaders and seven emeritus members, all responsible for providing financial oversight and ensuring that the mission of the Good Fellows Club is fulfilled.

Board members are expected to attend the four scheduled meetings per year as well as the luncheon and year end meeting. Each member of the Board is encouraged to identify new sponsors, expand the club's membership, serve on a committee, and assist with sponsorships and fundraising by calling on two to three potential sponsors each year.

Committees

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is comprised of members of the Board of Directors who meet to recommend policy and financial guidelines to the Board of Directors. Members of the executive committee serve in the following capacities:

Vice Chair Sponsorships

Vice Chair Communications

Secretary

Treasurer

Standing Committees

There are five standing committees chaired by a member of the Board of Directors. Each committee meets separately and reports to the Board of Directors on the progress of their respective initiatives.

Sponsorship	Renewing and securing new sponsors for the annual meeting and hosting the Sponsor's Appreciation Reception
Legacy Society	Outreach to donors at \$25,000 or more. Each year an annual luncheon is held to update Legacy Society members on all Good Fellows activities and family services
Program	Coordinate the annual meeting and Christmas luncheon including the selection of entertainment and speakers
Nominating & Governance	Recommends potential new Board of Directors and changes to the bylaws
Young Leaders	Recruit new members between the ages of 30 and 45 and organize an annual service project

Annual Christmas Luncheon & Meeting



The annual Christmas luncheon and meeting is held the second week of December. This event is recognized in the Charlotte community as the kick-off to the holiday season. With the support of over 125 sponsors and the Legacy Society, the Good Fellows raise approximately \$2.0M annually. Attendance at last year's luncheon exceeded 1,800 people. The program each year includes music, the Presidents Report, and fun and funding.

Families We Serve

I am truly grateful for your help with my rent payment!
I am a single mom and I try so very hard, but sometimes things do not go as planned. I am truly thankful for wonderful people like you, and I hope one day I can give back to others and make a difference like you do!

Somehow, just saying "thank you" doesn't seem like enough.
But I hope you know how much your kindness has meant to me.

Thank You!

Kim & Jayden

I just wanted to take the time out to say Thank you for everything. My family and myself really do appreciate the help you and your company gave in my time of need. They say angels come when you least expect it and you were truly my angel.

To
Ms. Christine
Demaine
The Good Fellows Club

With heartfelt appreciation for the thoughtfulness you've shown.

Words cannot express the thanks and gratefulness you and your company showed to me. It was nothing but the Grace of God placing his hands on ya'll hearts in helping me out in my time of need.
God Bless You and Your Company
Stephanie S.

Thank you
Ashunde
Taylor
Family



Family services coordinate distribution of 100% of the funds raised at the Christmas luncheon to those in our community that need a hand up not a hand-out. Those seeking financial assistance fill out an application that is vetted by our head of Family Services, Christine Demaine, who then issues checks within forty-eight hours of the approval. This provides those individuals with immediate financial assistance, allowing them to stay in their home.

2023 By the Numbers



\$1,850,000 distributed to families in 2023

1,500 families assisted

1,463 dues paying members

234 new members in 2023

1,823 Good Fellows and guests attended the 2023 Christmas Luncheon

