

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Annual Report



Lutheran
Social Services
of the Southwest

ACTION IN SERVICE





Faith in Motion

At Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, we believe love is more than a feeling—it's a force. It moves us to act, advocate, and stand with those who need a voice.

In Fiscal Year 2024, our mission was alive in action. Together with you, we stepped up, not just to meet immediate needs, but to speak out and stand strong for our most vulnerable neighbors.

You've helped refugees find safe new beginnings, and also worked to ensure policies reflect the dignity of every newcomer. You've provided food and shelter to those in crisis—and raised your voices to call attention to root causes. You've walked with older adults and young families alike, offering care and connection while advocating for the services they need to thrive.

This is what it looks like when faith becomes movement, when compassion becomes advocacy, and when service becomes systemic change.

By partnering with LSS-SW, *your* actions have been a powerful witness to what love can do.



Connie Phillips

Connie Phillips
President & CEO



Lutheran
Social Services
of the Southwest

Action in Service: Our Vision and Mission

**CALLED BY LOVE,
COMMITTED TO
SERVE.**

At Lutheran Social Services
of the Southwest, we are
called by God's love to
serve our neighbors.

OUR MISSION

**We stabilize people during crisis and transition, build
a foundation where people can thrive, and preserve
dignity and respect for the most vulnerable.**

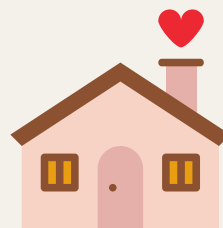
A snapshot of what we accomplished together in FY24:



152
foster homes equipped
with resources to
change lives



90,801
meals
delivered to
seniors in need



124
individuals experiencing
homelessness found
permanent housing



1,310
refugees
resettled

OUR 2023-2024 MISSION IN ACTION

Arizona continues to grapple with an affordable housing crisis and many of those impacted are the clients we serve at Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest. People of color, people with disabilities, those with mixed/new immigration status, women-single head of household families, and older adults are at higher risk for housing insecurity. They need sustainable, affordable housing to stabilize their lives, build a foundation on which they can thrive and preserve their dignity

3 Powerful Ways We Put Our Mission into Action:

1

Support state legislation that increases Affordable Housing.

Many of the clients served by LSS-SW are members of marginalized communities.

Arizona is among the 5 worst states for housing affordability.

2

Attend legislative meetings to advocate for clients.

These conversations help ensure that the **voices of vulnerable community members are heard by those in power**. By sharing real stories and highlighting local needs, advocates can influence policies, funding decisions, and programs that directly impact clients' lives. Engaging with elected officials is not only a right — it's a powerful tool for creating lasting, meaningful change.

3

Train individuals to advocate.

This grassroots approach not only builds leadership within the community but also **strengthens our collective ability to influence decisions** that shape housing, public services, and social support systems.





In FY24, we trained over 100 individuals to become advocates for their neighbors through our advocacy toolkit, created in partnership with Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Arizona (LAMA). The training includes a video, slideshow, and script to help people of faith speak up for justice. It's available for anyone to use—and can be viewed by scanning the QR code below.



LSS-SW joined LAMA for the third annual **Lutheran Day at the Legislature**. Held at the Arizona State Capitol, the event brought together 125 advocates from 24 of Arizona's 30 legislative districts. Participants engaged in discussions with lawmakers on pressing issues such as hunger, water access, voting rights, and affordable housing. This collaborative effort underscores the organization's commitment to empowering communities through informed and active participation in the legislative process.



1

Launched **Voter 101**

A nonpartisan tool to help staff and clients navigate Arizona's voting process

2

Hosted **Trainings**

Held voter education sessions to increase voter turn out

3

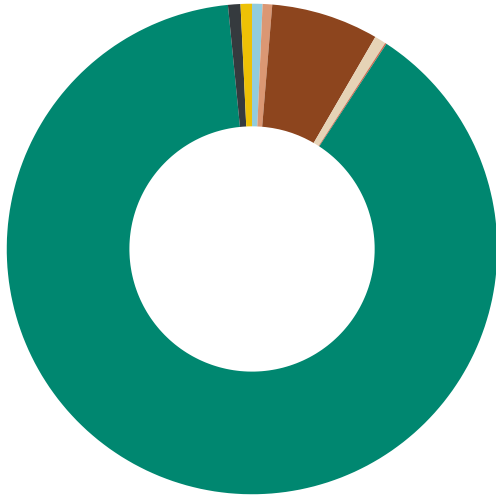
Increased **Community Engagement**

Collaborated with community organizations to provide on-site voter education to clients at Family Resource Centers



Sign up for our Advocacy Alerts at
www.lss-sw.org/subscribe

Revenue



CONTRIBUTIONS

Congregational Partners	\$185,625
Corporations	\$170,820
Individuals	\$1,911,047
United Way	\$204,545
Foundations	\$25,000

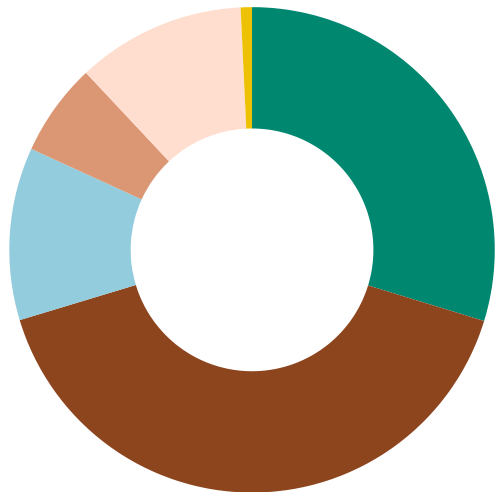
FEDERAL GRANTS	\$24,128,841
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OTHER

Program Fees	\$221,638
Other Income	\$202,743

TOTAL REVENUE	\$27,050,259
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Expenses



Refugee & Immigration	\$10,552,320
Aging & Disability	\$7,729,363
Children & Family	\$2,989,783
Emergency Services	\$1,606,906
General & Administrative	\$2,921,847
Development & Sustainability	\$195,252

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$25,995,471
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Change in Net Assets	\$1,054,788
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Ending Net Assets	\$5,476,162
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LSS-SW was blessed with over \$98,015 in in-kind donations in FY24—everything from diapers and dish soap to furniture and blankets. Every item was a reminder: when you speak out, generosity shows up.





18,790 volunteer hours



We ♥ our Volunteers

AGING & DISABILITY SERVICES

Our team prevents seniors and individuals with disabilities from experiencing isolation, loneliness, and health risks, so that they can live safely in their homes and within their communities. Services include caregiving, grocery shopping, and meal delivery.

- **You** brought **compassionate home care** to over 3,600 senior clients.
- **You** served 720 neighbors **nutritious meals**.



Approximately 26% of older adult households in the Tucson metropolitan area have incomes at or below 50% of the area median income, indicating significant financial challenges.

Among seniors with disabilities in Tucson, the poverty rate was notably higher at 51.9%, compared to 13.2% nationally.

SHARING THE WARMTH



Last winter, we carried out a holiday blanket drive for older adults and individuals in our aging and disability services.

Thanks to generous community support, hundreds of cozy blankets were delivered to clients across Arizona.

Barbara, a client in our home care program, was one of the many who received an early Christmas surprise. She hadn't expected anything special that day, but when she opened her package and found a soft new blanket, her face lit up with joy. When asked how she felt, Barbara smiled brightly and exclaimed, **"A blanket! I could always use a blanket!"**

For Barbara, **the blanket was more than a gift**—it was a reminder that she was seen, supported, and part of a caring community. "It's lovely. Every little bit helps," she said. **"To have a little family? It's wonderful. I love it."**

By the end of the drive, you had given 450 blankets. And while the need remained great, serving over 13,000 people in home care services, each blanket delivered **warmth, dignity, and connection to those who needed it most.**



CHILDREN & FAMILY *Services*

Together, we're building strong families to help children grow in safe and loving homes. We do this through a comprehensive range of services including child and parent workshops, foster and adoption support, family resource centers, and community events.

DID YOU KNOW?

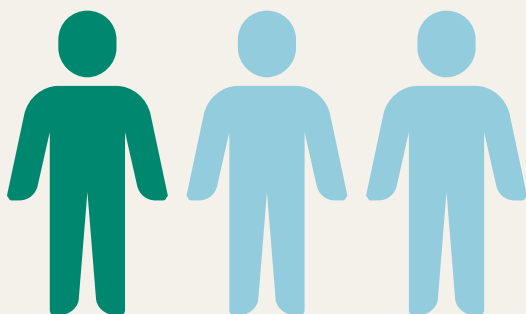
29%

OR NEARLY 1 IN 3
SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES
LIVE BELOW
THE POVERTY LINE.

When we first met Paola, a mother of three, she was carrying more than her share of burdens. Her family was struggling financially, both she and her husband were facing serious health issues, and they had no access to health insurance.

We worked with Paola to build a Family Development Plan focused on securing health coverage and food assistance. Her husband urgently needed surgery due to complications from diabetes, so we moved quickly—gathering documents, submitting applications, and navigating every hurdle together.

Just a week later, Paola called with incredible news: they had been approved for health insurance and SNAP benefits. “We are so blessed,” she said, her voice full of emotion.



249

Individuals were enrolled in workforce development at our Family Resource Centers

158

New families were enrolled in parenting education classes



PINWHEEL *Gardening*

In April, during National Child Abuse Prevention Month, we **rallied communities across Arizona** in a shared commitment to protect children and strengthen families. Guided by the national theme, “Building a Hopeful Future, Together,” you focused on raising awareness, spreading kindness, and promoting safe, nurturing environments for **every child**.

Supporters across our communities became ‘**Blue Thumb Gardeners**’. Through webinars and special events at our Family Resource Centers, individuals mobilized, spreading the word about Children’s Day and even by planting their own **Pinwheel Gardens**.

“

Parenting is tough, and kids don’t come with instruction manuals. Sometimes support from a neighbor or friend at church can make **a world of difference** to a parent that is struggling through a difficult time. We can all play a role in creating safe communities **where children thrive**.

”



Jannelle Radoccia,
Director of Children
and Family Services



OUR LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors

Janie Magruder, **Chair**

Bob York, **Vice-Chair**

Doug Pearson, **Treasurer**

Twila Burdick, **Secretary**

Members

Rev. Alan Field

Glen Johnson

Troy Justesen

Jeff Kraus

Wendy Look

Amber Mathewson

Rev. Jacqui Pagel

Jo Riester

Rev. Barbara Rapp

Rev. Roger Stuenkel



Executive Leadership

Connie Phillips, **President & CEO***

Christine Kobasic, **Chief Financial Officer***

Karen Bamford, **Chief Program Officer**

*Officers

EMERGENCY SERVICES



In FY24, we celebrated a powerful milestone. 11 individuals graduated from our I-HELP (Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program), each of whom successfully overcame homelessness and **took steps toward a new future.**

The ceremony's opening remarks acknowledged the growing crisis of homelessness and the **importance of community-based action.**

Speakers like Seth Dyson, Human Services Director for the City of Surprise, and Avondale Council Member Tina Conde, reminded us that real change comes from being present and proactive. LSS-SW President and CEO Connie Phillips and Regional Director Robert Sanders uplifted the graduates with words of admiration, emphasizing that while homelessness can happen to anyone, **healing and hope are possible with community support.**

6,800

Food Boxes
Distributed

16

I-HELP participants
enrolled in school

387

Neighbors
Sheltered

“

"Why do bad things happen to good people? These are good people. Homelessness can happen to anyone."

- Connie Phillips, CEO

”

REFUGEE & IMMIGRATION SERVICES



1,310
refugees resettled

Refugees had a **90%** self-sufficiency rate
(compared to the national average of 65%)



“I had to flee Afghanistan after witnessing the multiple murders of my fellow journalists.”

- Ahmad, a former refugee from Afghanistan

When the Taliban took over Afghanistan, Ahmad, a 29-year-old photojournalist, was forced to flee after witnessing the murder of his friend. Arriving in the U.S. alone, he found safety, community, and hope through LSS-SW. With your support, he found a job, pursued his passion through a photography internship, and began building a new life filled with stability, purpose, and gratitude he'll never forget.

386

children
enrolled in
school

112

youth
mentored

346

women found
empowerment

UNITING FOR UKRAINE

You welcomed over **138**
individuals from Ukraine.



Through the Uniting for Ukraine program, LSS-SW has welcomed families fleeing war and seeking safety. In Arizona, we've helped them secure housing and employment, access healthcare, enroll in school, and **connect with local Ukrainian communities**—ensuring they find not just refuge, but a path forward.

AFGHAN ADJUSTMENT ACT

In 2023, we actively advocated for the Afghan Adjustment Act, a crucial piece of legislation to provide a clear path to permanent residency for Afghan nationals who arrived in the U.S. under humanitarian parole.

As part of our efforts, we engaged directly with members of Congress, urging them to support this act of fairness and compassion.

Our work was grounded in our deep commitment to Afghan families we've resettled in Arizona—families who fled violence and faced legal uncertainty unless Congress acted.

Although the act was not passed, our advocacy efforts raised awareness and built momentum for future action, and we continue to stand with our Afghan neighbors in their pursuit of stability and a permanent home.





Lutheran
Social Services
of the Southwest



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