



Community Soup Kitchen Newsletter



Dear Friends and Supporters of CSK,

At the close of what has been an extraordinary year, we want to pause for moment to express our deepest gratitude to our staff, volunteers, donors, and the partners who made it possible.

This year, the CSK reached milestones we could only dream of when we launched the "Closing the Meal Gap" initiative.

CSK has served over 225,000 meals, a 153% increase from 86,911 meals in 2024.

Progress on Closing the Meal Gap: We exceeded our Year 1 goals, successfully opening all of our intended sub-agency locations. CSK@The Hill launched in March, CSK@Fair Haven opened in June, and CSK@Newhallville continued its remarkable growth.

Feeding the Hungry, No Matter the Circumstances: In response to growing uncertainty around emergency food access and benefits, CSK stepped up

to meet increasing demand. We expanded meal service across all neighborhoods, providing access to food when families needed it most.

Volunteer Support: Our volunteer workforce grew by nearly 40%, with over 15,900 volunteer hours logged—a testament to the New Haven community's commitment to caring for our neighbors. We now have over 550 registered volunteers, many of whom will be called upon to help meet our ambitious goals in 2026.

Food Pantry Operations: Through our partnership with IRIS at 75 Hamilton Street, we added food pantry support that has supported an additional 114,000 meals to families in the Fair Haven and West River communities.

We hope this update reflects the profound difference your support has made—and inspires us all to continue our work in the year ahead.

CSK Board of Directors

The Ladle Speaks!

Nourishing New Haven 2025 Annual Event!

Closing the Meal Gap Progress to Plan - Year 1

Program Updates

CSK@St. Francis Coming in 2026!

CSK in the News and Our Thanks

November 8, 2025



Nourishing New Haven 2025

On a crisp November evening, more than 300 volunteers, donors, and partners gathered for Nourishing New Haven 2025, our annual celebration of community and service. The evening stood as a powerful reminder that hope and progress are possible—thanks to the dedication of hundreds of caring individuals working together right here in New Haven.

The night, MC'd by Alder Caroline Tanbee-Smith, featured an incredible selection of meals from beloved New Haven and local area restaurants, accompanied by stirring performances from Mt. Cavalry Tabernacle Choir, video documentary productions from ASSA ABLOY, support from Crest Lincoln and a host of others. Thank you to everyone who made this such a special night!

Thank You Phil Smith



Phil Smith was celebrated for over 30 years of service as a Treasurer and member of CSK's Board of Directors.

Burton Alter was honored for his 15+ years of Board service and past presidency.

Those in attendance were reminded of the dedication required to keep an organization like CSK viable, sustainable and on mission for almost 50 years.

Phil and Burton will be sorely missed, but their legacy of service will continue as an example for all who follow.

Thank You Burton Alter



Bill and Jane Dennet were awarded CSK Volunteers of the Year for their ongoing contributions that set the standard for service - not just to CSK, but to our food pantry partners at IRIS and in all that they do to help the New Haven community.

CT Foodshare was awarded the 2025 CSK Partner of the Year, the significance of which was reinforced by Miranda Miro, CTFS Senior Director of Network Relations, who recounted over 40 years of continued partnership between the two organizations.

Thank you, CT Foodshare, for all that you do for the food insecure of Connecticut.

Thank You Bill & Jane Dennet



Thank You CT Foodshare



Closing the Meal Gap: 2025 Progress

Our three-year "Closing the Meal Gap 2025-2027" campaign aims to reduce New Haven's annual meal gap by 15% through neighborhood-specific food service expansion. Here's where we stand after Year One:

Neighborhood Progress

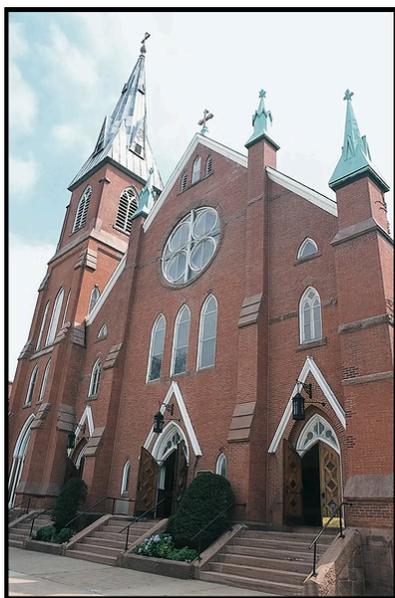
- **Downtown: 38,953 meals served**—103% of our 2027 target already achieved
- **Newhallville: 38,251 meals served**—92.6% of our 2027 target
- **The Hill: 18,320 meals served**—47.8% of our 2027 target
- **Fair Haven: 4,865 meals served**—43.7% of our 2027 target
- **Dwight: 3,314 meals served**—13.9% of our 2027 target

Workforce Development Progress

In 2025, three additional staff members were added to the payroll, delivering on our goals to staff the Closing the Meal Gap program through job creation in the neighborhoods where meal programs are being designed and implemented.

2026 Goals

In Year Two, we will expand our reach to new neighborhoods including Fair Haven (St. Francis), West Rock, West River, and Edgewood. Our 2026 target is to serve 47% more hot meals (over 165,000 in total) across all locations—not including food pantry operations. To achieve these goals, we need your continued support.



Coming 2026: CSK @ St. Francis

We are thrilled to announce that **CSK will open its newest location in January 2026 in partnership with Blessed Michael McGivney Parish at St. Francis Church** in Fair Haven (just off Grand Avenue on Ferry Street).

This new location will feature dine-in and take-out meal service alongside expanded kitchen capacity in a fully refurbished commercial kitchen. The St. Francis site will significantly increase our ability to serve the Fair Haven community and surrounding neighborhoods.

Volunteers Needed: We're assembling a team to assist with the buildout starting in January. If you have skills in construction, painting, or general facilities work—or simply want to help—please contact us!

Open Volunteer Role Opportunities

CSK's success (and our 87% program efficiency rate) is a direct function of our volunteer support. With our dramatic expansion, we have several key roles to fill:

CSK's Volunteer Coordinator would ideally be available on a regular basis to match work and projects that need doing with the people capable of doing that work.

St. Francis Build-Out Team: Starting in January, we'll need volunteers to help prepare and operate meal services at our new location at St. Francis Church for opening in early 2026.

If you're interested in any of these roles, please contact development@csknewhaven.org or call (203) 624-4594.



Basic Needs Program Updates



CSK Public Shower Program

CSK operates New Haven's only year-round independent public shower program, providing dignity and essential hygiene services to those without access to basic facilities. **In 2025, we provided 211 private showers**—a 189% increase from last year. Each guest receives personal hygiene kits and access to fresh clothing.

CSK Clothing Program

In partnership with Midnight Run Community, we distributed over 2,200 pieces of clothing and 1,100 jackets so far this year. Our annual coat drive distributes warm coats to guests during the holiday season and is expected to be even more successful than last year. Special thanks to all who donated—particularly women's and children's sizes which remain in high demand.



Childhood Hunger Initiative

In partnership with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.®, Tau Xi Omega Chapter, through the CHIPP™ Program, CSK has expanded its commitment to fighting childhood hunger. This year, **we increased our weekend meal service from 240 to 400 meals per weekend**, now serving 100 children each week—up from 60 last year. **This year's 8,260 meals represents a 44% increase in meals serving food insecure children.**

In October 2025, we improved the quality of food being packed in our CHIPP meal kits, ensuring that children receive even more nutritious meals to sustain them over weekends away from school. These meals help ensure that fewer and fewer children in the Greater New Haven area will go hungry between the days when there is access to school lunches.

75 Hamilton Street Food Pantry

In April 2025, CSK began its support for operations of the food pantry at 75 Hamilton Street in partnership with IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services). This 5,000 square-foot warehouse has become a hub for food storage and distribution in the Fair Haven and West River communities.

2025 Impact

- 261,000 pounds of food received and distributed
- 217,000 meals served through pantry operations
- 114,000 meals attributed to CSK support
- 650+ families served weekly

Thanks to the collaboration between warehouse managers Christian Gilbert and Angela "Diamond" Carroll, we plan for expanded integration between our hot meal and food pantry operations in 2026.



Special Thanks & Recognition

ASSA ABLOY



We are deeply grateful for the ongoing support of ASSA ABLOY, whose help as a corporate pillar of the New Haven community has been transformative for CSK in 2025. Beyond their generous financial contributions, ASSA ABLOY employees have volunteered their time at our facilities, packaging meals, serving guests, and supporting our mission in countless ways.

ASSA ABLOY has produced two incredible videos highlighting our partnership and the impact of their support. We invite you to watch and share these stories:

- **Volunteer Recognition Video: See ASSA ABLOY employees in action at CSK**
(<https://youtu.be/Sr7ZUtpRwyg>)
- **Corporate Partnership Video: Learn about the relationship between ASSA ABLOY and CSK**
(<https://youtu.be/0gTQFzUs4mc>)

"Because a safer, more open world starts with showing up for our communities." — ASSA ABLOY

Celebrating 47 Years at Christ Church

We are reminded that CSK's work has evolved over the course of decades thanks to our deep and enduring partnership with Christ Church New Haven. Since 1978, Christ Church has provided not only a home for CSK at 84 Broadway, but also a foundation of shared purpose—feeding the hungry and caring for our neighbors in need.

Our gratitude this season extends to the entire congregation, to the dedicated parishioners who volunteer alongside us each week, to the members of the vestry, and especially to Father Stephen Holton for his continued support, guidance, and service on the CSK Board of Directors. This partnership in thought and ministry has been essential as we have expanded our reach to meet the basic needs of guests across New Haven.

Recent Recognition of CSK

CSK's work has been featured in local media throughout 2025. Here are some highlights:

- **New Haven Register (April 2025):** "IRIS' New Haven food pantry remains open thanks to Community Soup Kitchen" — Coverage of our partnership to operate the Hamilton Street food pantry.
- **New Haven Independent (April 2025):** "Soup Kitchen, IRIS, Neighbors Team Up" — Story of how CSK, IRIS, and East Rock volunteers collaborated to keep vital services running.
- **The Politic (December 2025):** "New Haven Nonprofits and the Fight for Funding" - covers the need for emergency food providers to step up during funding cutbacks
- **New Haven Independent (December 2025):** "Nonprofit Leaders Get Their Flowers", celebrating the Constellation Award from the 9th Annual Nonprofit Stars Align Awards Breakfast



Café George
by Paula

An extra-special thank you to Paula Konareski and Cafe George for their incredible food support throughout the year, enabling us to meet the demand from new CSK locations.

The Year Ahead...And Giving Thanks



2025 was a year of unprecedented progress, but in 2026 our goals are even more ambitious. We plan to **open our St. Francis location, expand into three additional neighborhoods,** and continue growing our existing programs.

To achieve these goals, we will need your continued support—whether through donations, volunteering, or simply spreading the word about CSK's mission.

Please consider making a year-end donation at www.csknewhaven.org/donate

As we continue to serve CSK's mission, please know that you are encouraged to reach directly out with any questions, ideas or requests to director@csknewhaven.org or by phone at 203-535-7670.



Thank You to Our Supporters

Our heartfelt thanks go out to everyone who made 2025 possible. From our corporate sponsors and foundation partners to individual donors and the dozens of volunteers who give their time each week—you are the reason CSK can serve the hungry of New Haven.

And a Final Thank You to **haven's harvest**

Since September 2025, Haven's Harvest has delivered over 22,000 pounds of rescued food to CSK through 89 coordinated food rescues—a powerful example of what's possible when local nonprofits work together. By combining Haven's Harvest's transportation and logistics expertise with CSK's expanding network of meal sites, we're able to serve more neighbors while reducing waste. We look forward to growing this partnership in 2026 and thank the Haven's Harvest team for their outstanding work.



*When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully,
everyone is blessed.
- Maya Angelou*



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