

# Essex Churches Together

*An interfaith movement to help those in need in Essex County*

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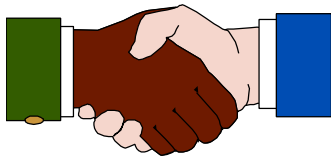
## Defining Our Mission

This is the step we are on now-defining our Mission. As mentioned in the first newsletter, each time we meet we become more directed to the path this group should take. We have had more meetings, more prayers, more speakers, more volunteers, and more input of all kinds, and we are on the all-important step of developing our Mission Statement.

Once that is done, the organization will be able to move forward with an intentional direction rather than responding to emergencies. In other words, we plan to be both pro-active and re-active.

## Is Your Essex Co. Church Present?

One of our goals is to have some form of participation of at least 80 percent of the churches in Essex County. This may be by responding to calls for specific projects, supplying postage money, or providing storage for some food, money, or clothing needed in emergencies by our citizens.



At present there are representatives from the following churches: Antioch Baptist, Angel Visit Baptist, Beale Memorial Baptist, First Baptist in Loretto, Mt. Zion Baptist, St. John Baptist, St. John's Episcopal, St. Timothy's Catholic, Tappahannock Memorial Methodist, Tappahannock

Presbyterian, Upper Essex Baptist and Vauter's Episcopal. There is also an at-large constituency of interested citizens of Essex.

## The Next Meeting

Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday evening of each month. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 25, 2005 in the conference room of the Essex Public Library at 7:30 PM. Kathy Hughes is chairing this group. Call her (443-2198) for more information.

If you would like another copy of the first newsletter call Alice Roye (443-2021) or email [alicer@inna.net](mailto:alicer@inna.net). The first newsletter, sent out to 39 pastors in the area, can be sent via email or mailed.

## Why Are We Here?

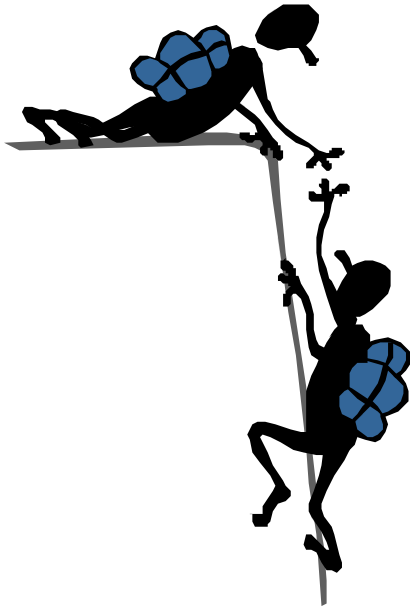
As we have assessed the resources in this area it has become increasingly clear that Essex is underserved and is a county with great need. We have found that there are such county-wide church alliances in all counties surrounding Essex, but ours is just now becoming viable.

All of us who have spent time in a pastor's office know the many requests that come in weekly for assistance with paying bills, for food to last to the end of the month, for fuel in the winter, to name just a few needs.

There is consensus among the Mission Committee representatives of the various churches that the need is greater than any of the churches can

begin to meet alone, but with wise use of the resources we do have, and by working together, we think we can be

more effective in providing for our neighbors, in the name of Jesus Christ.



For this reason it is important that the representatives of each church carry back the information and plans of ECT, and that feedback and responses from the congregations be obtained and shared by the person attending the meeting.

Clearly this is not to be *instead* of projects that individual churches wish to do, but for the needs in common, there are ways to help if we work together.

### **What Have We Done so Far?**

We have sponsored a very successful canned food drive on October 9

We have communicated to other churches about activities in our individual churches so that all congregations can be invited. These include the Santa Lunch by St. John's Episcopal, the Children of the World concert by Tappahannock Presbyterian, and the Christmas Cantata presented to the community by Tappahannock Memorial United Methodist Church.

We are preparing *A Resource Directory* that will soon be printed and distributed to all churches

We have recruited two drivers for the Monday Meals-on-Wheels Route in Dunnsville and are searching for two more. We are supporting an effort to establish a Habitat for Humanity chapter in Essex County by getting the word out through our churches. We are encouraging volunteers to contact Social Services if they are willing to provide transportation to medical appointments both within Essex County and to and from Richmond. They will be reimbursed mileage. There may be members of YOUR Church who would serve this way. For more information call Teresa Thrall, DSS at 443-3561

We are searching for more volunteer personnel to help Mrs. Oster at the Rappahannock Community Service Center so that it can be open more than two part-days a week.

### **A Note to the Clergy<sup>†</sup>**

## **A Lay-Initiative**

Pastors, priests, and rectors have accomplished one of their goals if the congregation is taking Christ's work outside of the church doors. Care of our neighbors is work for the servants of Christ and it should be carried out by the congregation as well as the pastor.

However, *Essex Churches Together* cannot survive without ministerial support: Therefore, we ask that you please

- ❖ Encourage a member of your church to take responsibility to represent your church at all of the meetings
- ❖ Encourage your representative to report on the progress of the organization
- ❖ Encourage response to specific requests for help in the community.