



Winter 2024

info@icsseattle.org

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206-622-1930

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www.icsseattle.org

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1215 Thomas St.
Seattle, WA 98109

Historic, Unprecedented and Freezing



It feels like we have been saying "historic" or "unprecedented" a lot the last few years and the recent cold weather was no exception!

At ICS, this is about as dangerous as it gets for our neighbors without homes. We do what we can to keep them safe: try and refer them to emergency shelters, hand out sleeping bags, blankets, socks and hand/toe warmers. We serve hot breakfast and hot chili or soup for lunch and we pour A LOT of cups of coffee & hot cocoa!



We extended our Hygiene Center hours to stay open later into the evening, giving our unsheltered neighbors a safe place to stay warm. We also opened for special hours on MLK Day when we normally would have been closed.



Due to freezing temperatures during Food Bank we moved food distribution so shoppers could come inside and stay warm while they waited their turn. This meant that staff and volunteers were *weathering* the cold!

It is a community effort in times like these. The Recovery Shelter residents helped serve lunch in the Hygiene Center, helped at Food Bank and made sure the walkways stayed free of ice.



Five people died in the Seattle area during the storm but we were able to keep our community safe. Your support during this time was crucial and we are so grateful to everyone that donated, shared and volunteered!

Connect with ICS on Social Media!

@ICS.Seattle

@icsseattle

@icsseattle

ICS in the News

Did you see ICS featured in the Seattle Times last month?! If you missed it, you can find it online to read about Tito and how he found community & hope at the ICS Hygiene Center and help to build a life out of homelessness!

Read the full article:
bit.ly/ICSSeattleTimes



Spread the Word !!

Please help us spread the word about ICS and the services we provide!

One of the best ways for us to grow our network is by word of mouth from members of our community.

Share emails, newsletters, volunteer opportunities and like and share ICS social media posts!

Be an Ambassador for ICS and invite friends and family to know more about ICS and become inspired to join us in this important work!

The purpose of life is not to be happy.

It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

2024 Legislative Update

ICS' mission is to alleviate the affects of hunger, homelessness and addiction. Besides the everyday work providing basic needs, we also must advocate for a larger systemic change working to end homelessness and hunger.

We work with a number of coalitions & alliances who advocate for our neighbors experiencing hunger and homelessness. They track potential bills that will help (or possibly hurt) the people who rely on us for help. It is very important for lawmakers to hear from you as they consider these issues.

The 2024 Washington State Legislative Session is a short one this year, only running January 9 to March 7. Things move fast during the legislative session and bills go through many steps in different committees before they become law. It's important to take action in a timely manner and you may need to take action multiple times as a bill moves to a different group of lawmakers. They all need to hear from you!

A good way you can help is to keep an eye on legislation that would benefit members of our community. Below are links to our partners. You can get to know some of the legislative priorities this year and be ready to help by signing up for Action Alert emails at SKCCH, WLIHA and others:

- **Food Lifeline:** <https://foodlifeline.org/food-lifelines-2024-advocacy-agenda/>
- **Northwest Harvest:** <https://www.northwestharvest.org/our-work/advocacy-public-policy/our-legislative-priorities/>
- **Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness (SKCCH):** <https://blog.homelessinfo.org/the-coalitions-state-legislative-priorities/>
- **Washington Low Income Housing Alliance (WLIHA):** <https://www.wliha.org/advocacy/2024-public-policy-priorities>
- **Washington Recovery Alliance:** <https://www.washingtonrecoveryalliance.org/legislative-priorities>

2024 Advocacy Days

There are several Advocacy Days down in Olympia that you can participate in, if you are interested. Get in touch with one of the coalitions above for info!

The three that most directly affect the people we serve at ICS are:

- Recovery Advocacy Day, January 25th
- Housing & Homelessness Day, January 30th
- Hunger Action Day, February 1st

Service of Remembrance

Earlier this month we helped host the Service of Remembrance to honor and remember people experiencing homelessness who died over the last year. This year, we read the names of 379 people and lit a candle for each person as their name was called.



Rooted in Community

ICS partner, Rooted Northwest, is a community focused real estate team strongly invested in our neighbors and neighborhoods.

Through the "Rooted in Community" Program at Rooted Northwest, Carrie Watt and Brandon Hundley will generously donate 15% of their commission to Immanuel Community Services when ICS supporters work with them to buy or sell a home!



"Be a part of our mission to create positive change, one home at a time."

<https://www.rootednorthwest.co/> • carrie@rootednorthwest.co • Phone number: (206) 963-7171

Employee Giving Funds

ICS is part of both the *King County Employee Giving Fund* and the *Washington State Employees Combined Fund Drive*. This means anyone working for King County or Washington State can designate Immanuel Community Services and give directly to ICS through their payroll, pre-tax!!

You may also be paid for volunteer time or be able to donate unused vacation time. If you work for the State of Washington or King County, please consider identifying ICS as your non-profit beneficiary.

Many workplaces offer workplace giving campaigns. Please ask your employer.

A Note from the Executive Director

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." –Aesop



A few weeks ago, my cell phone started acting up. I wasn't receiving texts & calls were unreliable so I found myself in the store buying a new phone. As I was finishing my purchase, the store was closing and there was someone who wouldn't leave. The young man clearly had developmental capacity issues and wasn't being easy to work with. He would respond "I'm just looking" when he was asked what he needed help with and after several minutes of this, he was asked to leave because the store was closing.

The store manager handled it perfectly. He was kind, calm and patient but also firm. When it became clear that they were at an impasse, he called the police. The sheriff deputy that responded, on the other hand, did not handle it well. He was rude. Condescending. Belligerent. The young man was not being aggressive, had no weapons and was not being threatening. He was simply not leaving but everyone in the store could tell he was confused.

The deputy called for backup and when it arrived, all three of them jumped the young man and knocked him to the ground. He was wailing and crying, clearly terrified. They pinned his face down on the carpet for quite awhile and when they finally let him up, he had carpet burns, scratches & blood on his face.

A similar situation occurred two weeks earlier outside of ICS. Someone known in the neighborhood and understood to have cognitive issues, was tackled to the ground by several officers; his face smashed into the street with officers kneeling on him. He also clearly showed signs of an impairment. He was crying out because he was scared and did not understand what was going on. The officers didn't show any sign of getting up off the ground and continued to kneel on him even though he was subdued & in handcuffs. It was only when I walked over to them that they finally let him up and guided him to the police vehicle. If the situation wasn't bad enough already, the five officers kept asking one another what he was being arrested for. No one knew.

We've all heard a lot of talk about the need for law enforcement to be trained in crisis response and to have mental health counselors present. This is critical. Would these incidents have turned out differently? Absolutely.

But I also believe this is about more than that. This is about our deeply dysfunctional system and a brutally broken social contract. It is aggression against people in our community who are living on the margins — those suffering from homelessness, cognitive & intellectual impairment, substance use, hunger and mental health issues. Marginalized people just trying to survive. It's heartbreaking.

We see this with the City of Burien making it illegal for "Burien residents experiencing homelessness from living on public land for survival" or the Kenmore City Council rejecting a fully funded 100-unit affordable housing building because Kenmore residents "didn't want the homeless" in their community.

There was a third police incident I witnessed, just last week outside of ICS. This person also had clear mental health/cognitive issues but he also swung at the officers. Of all three incidents, this was the only one that warranted physical intervention...and it's the only time it *wasn't used*. So, it **IS** possible to meet someone in crisis with compassion & empathy and resolve a difficult situation peacefully. If we treat folks in our community as "neighbors", they will act like our neighbors. If we treat them as "other" they will act as "other".

February is just around the corner. Instead of fear and aggression, let's focus on kindness, compassion and loving our neighbors.

Legacy of Hope

Have you thought about leaving a lasting gift to ICS to continue this important work?

Please consider supporting ICS in this very special way by leaving a gift in your will. Your legacy will help care for the hungry, homeless and vulnerable. If you have already done this, please let us know. If you would like to explore this further...we can help!

Please contact Natalie Dewey-Smith for more information: natalie@icsseattle.org

ICS Putt-Putt Tournament

The **7th Annual ICS Putt-Putt Tournament** is right around the corner! In order for this event to be a success, we are looking for **18 Team Captains** to lead their team raising funds for ICS programs!

Would you like to host a team? Start putting your team together now and get ready for a fun-filled day of golfing for good to help care for our neighbors experiencing hunger & homelessness!

Email Natalie Dewey-Smith: natalie@icsseattle.org

2023 Giving Statements

2023 Giving Statements will be sent out at the end of January. Look for yours in your email or wherever you receive US mail.

Please remember that donations made to ICS through other organizations may not be included on your statement. This includes Give Big, Facebook, Instagram, PayPal, etc.

You will receive a statement from them directly.

ICS Annual Meeting

Save the date for Immanuel Community Services
2023 Annual Meeting!



Sunday—March 10, 2024
12:00 pm
Immanuel Lutheran Church

Apply to Join our Board!

Are you passionate about giving the people in your community a sense of dignity and hope? Would you like to help alleviate the effects of hunger, homelessness and addiction by providing community-based social services to those in need?

If you or anyone you know is interested, we hope you'll consider applying to join the ICS Board of Directors!

Email president@icsseattle.org for more info!

Winter Needs List

With record breaking low temperatures this month, it is as dangerous as it gets for our neighbors without homes and we do everything we can to help them stay safe. You can help by donating winter needs:

- Hand/Toe Warmers
- Small Umbrellas
- Hot Cocoa & Coffee



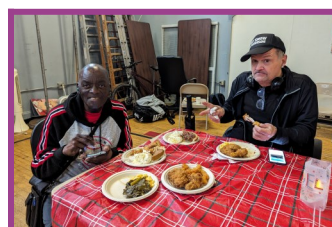
2023 Holidays

Thanks to our friends at **400 Fairview** who helped coordinate Thanksgiving lunch in Hygiene!!



Derek, an alum from the ICS Recovery Shelter, receives a graduation gift at the Recovery Thanksgiving Dinner

Guests enjoying lunch from **Cookie's Country Chicken** at the ICS Hygiene Center Holiday Party



Holiday fun in the ICS Hygiene Center—Go Seahawks!