CAJM Manna

Building a Lowcountry where justice and equity prevail

Invest in CAJM Today!

WHY I INVEST IN CAJM: Member Testimony

I'm Dr. Char Fitzwater, and it's CAJM's fault I'm running for the School Board!

Not only did I learn a lot about CCSD school board governance issues and ways to address those when I was on the Education Governance Committee, but I also experienced the fantastic CAJM processes, collaborative approach and community engagement that make a dramatic difference for us all.

Jim and I invest in CAJM, because it gives us and our faith families a way to make a meaningful impact addressing pressing concerns in the Charleston Area. I stepped away from involvement on the Education Governance Committee due to my campaign, but we remain wholehearted investors in this amazing work!

— Dr. Char Fitzwater

What CAJM gave Char wasn't just knowledge, it was the confidence and community to step up publicly. CAJM walked alongside her, motivating her, sharpening her skills, and helping her discover the leader already within her. That is what your investment makes possible. When we invest in CAJM, we're not just funding campaigns and research, we're developing skilled, courageous leaders who carry this work into every corner of our community.

We are deeply grateful to Dr. Char Fitzwater for her commitment and dedication. Her journey from School Governance Committee member to School Board candidate didn't happen in a vacuum; CAJM helped develop her, and she helped shape CAJM. CAJM exists to develop leaders, like Char. When people of faith show up, do the hard work, and CAJM shows up alongside them, something powerful happens. Leaders are built. Communities are changed. Her journey is the fruit of what happens when a community invests in people, and people invest right back. That is the relationship at the heart of this work: we grow each other.

Team leaders as you follow up with network members this Investment Season, share your own story. Why do you invest? What has CAJM developed in you? Let that be the invitation. Because when people see what's possible, when they see Char, when they see you, when they see themselves, they understand that investing in CAJM is investing in who we are becoming together.

We've received a total of $92,606 so far in 2026 toward our $200,000 individual investment drive goal! We look forward to your continued support this year.

Click Here
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Help build statewide affordable housing legislation

CAJM is doing something historic. Together with MORE Justice and GOAL Justice, we are working to create statewide legislation that removes barriers for congregations to build affordable housing on their own properties.

To draft this legislation and show lawmakers its potential impact, we need to know what congregations across South Carolina are already doing, what they own, what barriers they face, and what they are willing to do. That picture can only be built with your help.

CAJM clergy — please complete the survey. Even if your congregation is not currently able to provide affordable housing, your response helps tell the full story. Please also share it with other clergy in your denomination around the state and encourage them to respond. Take the survey here →

Everyone else — check in with your clergy. Have they seen this? Have they responded? That follow-up is an act of organizing.

Request for Proposals: Food Council Facilitator

In our research, we learned that a professional facilitator is essential for a successful and sustainable Food Council.

The facilitator's purpose is to provide structure, guidance, and neutral support to help the group move from shared concern to organized action, through helping the group establish their priorities and process, and creating space for all voices to be heard.

The Council needs the best possible candidate.

Please review and share this request for proposals with anyone you think would be a good fit. ***The submission deadline is TODAY August 17th!***

Once we have proposals back, the selection of the facilitator will be in the hands of the organizations that will make up the Council. We are excited to find the right facilitator for our local needs.

Gadsden Creek is back in the news!

Gadsden Creek is back in the news and the fight to protect it is more urgent than ever.

This past July, a Dominion contractor applied powerful herbicides to large swathes of Gadsden Creek. Our environmental community mounted a robust response, and the city stepped up as well. The incident is a stark reminder of how vulnerable this irreplaceable salt marsh remains and why we cannot let up.

See the full story on TV 5 by reporter Maya Brown.

In March, we showed up to the Project 3500 charette and saw plans to build directly on top of the creek. We pushed back, engaged the architect, and he revised his drawings. But we are not there yet. We continue our postcard campaign: please write to Mayor Cogswell about why you don't want to see development on Gadsden Creek!

Please write a postcard, if you live and vote in the City of Charleston, and ESPECIALLY if you live on the peninsula.

Print the postcard!

Here are talking points for your message.

Two ways to take action:

1. Write a postcard to Mayor Cogswell.

Mail to: Mayor Cogswell, P.O. Box 652, Charleston, SC 29402

2. Show up to the Open Studio Events.

The City is hosting a series of Charleston Peninsula Plan Open Studio Events at the Civic Design Center, 85 Calhoun Street, on Thursdays this fall. These sessions give the public a chance to engage directly with the City's emerging plans for peninsula residents, plans that could positively or negatively impact Gadsden Creek and our public housing neighbors. We need a committed cohort to attend, ask questions, and report back to the committee.

The event calendar is here:

The September 3 event – 3PM to 6PM – is especially important because it will feature Project 3500, the City of Charleston's Plan to build 3,500 new affordable housing units by 2032. The plan currently includes targets of 500 New Affordable Units for its WestEdge Project and 103 New Affordable Units for its Gadsden Green+ Extension Project

Please email CAJM.staff@gmail.com to RSVP !

Upcoming Events

Food Insecurity Calendar:

First of all, Charleston County Council will be voting on our funding request at their committee meetings on Thursday, August 21, which begin at 5:00pm. ***We need a visible CAJM presence in the*** ***Council Chambers.*** Please be at CAJM HQ at 4:45 or at 4:30pm for a pre-meeting huddle. The address is 4045 Bridge View Dr.

Secondly, we will be meeting with Charleston City Councilmember Leslie Skardon on Wednesday, August 26, at 10:45am via Zoom. Click here to register.

Then, we are going to have a Full Committee meeting on Thursday, September 10, at 6pm via Zoom. Please attend to hear a full report on our progress and next steps. *Click here to register.*

8/27 CAJM Board of Directors Meeting

When: Thursday, August 27, 2026 - 5:30 - 6:30 PM

Who: All CAJM BOD elected representatives from each congregation and organization

Elected representatives from each congregation please plan to attend and register below.

Register here!

9/1 Listening Process Kickoff

Team Leaders and Clergy should all plan to attend our Listening Process Kickoff! This is where you receive the House Meeting script and start planning for the listening season. Come get encouraged, inspired, and equipped for effective House Meetings this year.

Tuesday, September 1st
6:30pm to 8:00pm
Location Calvary Episcopal Church

Register here!

House Meetings should take place between September 27 and October 25.

In the Community

Development Ordinance Project (UDO)

The City of North Charleston is preparing for growth. They are rewriting the rules that guide how the city grows, shaping not only neighborhoods, but also streets, sidewalks, and public spaces.

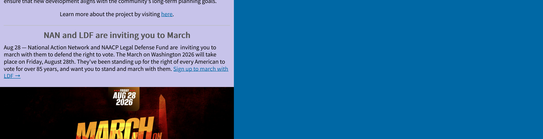
What is a UDO?

A Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is a comprehensive local law that combines zoning, subdivision, and land development regulations into a single document. It establishes how land may be used and developed by defining permitted land uses, building standards, setbacks, density, parking, landscaping, signage, environmental protections, and the procedures for obtaining development approvals. A UDO provides clear, consistent rules for property owners, developers, and local officials while helping ensure that new development aligns with the community's long-term planning goals.

Learn more about the project by visiting here.

NAN and LDF are inviting you to March

Aug 28 — National Action Network and NAACP Legal Defense Fund are inviting you to march with them to defend the right to vote. The March on Washington 2026 will take place on Friday, August 28th. They've been standing up for the right of every American to vote for over 85 years, and want you to stand and march with them. Sign up to march with LDF →



Investment Season is a reminder that this work is powered by people — people who believe in a more just and fair Charleston, and who are willing to put something behind that belief. If you haven't made your investment yet, today is a great day to start.

Invest

Want to receive updates from CAJM issue committees? Let us know here.

Charleston Area Justice Ministry

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