



Common injustice. Uncommon Commitment.
*The Campaign to Create a Credit Union
For the Communities of the Diocese of New York*

We hear our people’s experiences of injustice all around us.

Sammy is a member of a congregation in the Diocese of New York. He’s the first member of his family to have a full time job, working as a custodian at a nearby hospital. Unfortunately, no one in his family has ever shown him how to create a savings account because no one in his family has a savings account.

Sammy has no credit history, and when a financial emergency strikes, everyone he knows points him to a payday lending store that will cost him hundreds of dollars in fees and interest. He cannot rent a car, book a flight, or even think about saving for the future. The fees to cash his paycheck set him back even further.

Sammy is not alone.

Every day within our Diocese, our neighbors and friends — members of our congregations, guests at our food pantries, after school programs, and shelters — are caught in a cycle of financial difficulties that most banks cannot or will not address.

Today, Sammy is being robbed of his future financial security, while most of us unknowingly walk by. How can we avoid being on the other side of the road? Exactly how we can help?

We can make a shared commitment to economic justice.

Caring for our neighbor is a core teaching of our faith. Jesus reminded his followers, “whatever you do for the least of these, you do for me.” Luke chapter 10 speaks highly of the Samaritan who cared for a man who was attacked and was left wounded on the road.

Economic inequality appears across our neighborhoods, from Staten Island to Poughkeepsie. Because of financial requirements, many of our people cannot use traditional banks and lack access to basic banking tools. The disconnections impact the everyday lives of our people.

It’s structural injustice— and it disproportionately impacts people of color. Economic and racial injustice are entangled.

Together, we can address systemic injustice with the shared commitment of our communities across the Diocese of New York.

A Credit Union for people of the Diocese of New York

A Credit Union Task Force has guided the creation of an independent, federally accredited credit union to support our parishes, parishioners, and participants in our programs across the Diocese of New York.

It will open banking services to the underserved, while providing low-cost emergency loans and financial counseling. It will be independent and financially responsible. The extensive chartering process is nearly complete.

Through a national online network, communities across the Diocese will be able to access basic services locally, in their own neighborhoods.

The last step to charter is to ask our congregations, chaplaincies, and schools to show our shared commitment to economic justice for our people by making a 3-year financial pledge for the credit union's launch.

We are required to raise \$850,000 in start up capital gifts. We have raised \$500,000.

Now we are seeking to crowdfund the remaining \$350,000 in pledges from individuals, congregations, schools, and chaplaincies across the Diocese of New York.

These pledges and contributions are not a loan or a means of formally joining the credit union; rather the capital gifts will help pay for initial salaries, insurance, and other operating costs while the credit union becomes financially viable.

This fund of \$350,000 will be called the Andrew Dietsche Economic Justice Fund, to honor our bishop. Members of our diocese who wish to honor his service may do so through their gifts to this fund.

Our Values: Truth, Justice, Integrity, & Transformation.

The credit union and this campaign embody the values the Reparations Commission has shared and the whole Diocese of New York has adopted for repair of injustice: truth, justice, integrity, and transformation.

"In order for there to be real Reparation, we must tell the truth ... we must seek justice for all ... we must pursue it with integrity ... and we must be open to transformation not only for ourselves individually but for society collectively."

Here's what you can do.

We're launching the campaign by approaching leaders in the Diocese.

Our "ask" to you and the other congregational leaders as follows: Will you add your name as a *campaign co-chair* by making three commitments:

1. Will your parish make a pledge (making a financial pledge is all that we need at this time – we don't need actual donations yet) for an amount that's possible for your community?
2. Will you invite two other Episcopal congregations within your area to have their parish pledge as well?
3. Will you invite key individuals within your parish to make additional pledges?

<i>Potential Gifts</i>			
1 Year Pledge	3 Year Pledge	Number	Total
\$5,000	\$15,000	8	\$120,000
\$1,700	\$3,500	10	\$35,000
\$1,000	\$3,000	40	\$120,000
\$500	\$1,500	50	\$75,000
\$100	\$300	20	\$6,000
		128	\$356,000

Here's How.

We're creating a simple, secure online system to receive pledges and contributions.

For our leadership pledges, you can simply respond to

Uncommoncommitment@gmail.com

We'd like to publish a first list of co-chairs by August 15. Our goal is to complete the campaign by the end of September so that we can announce at the November diocesan convention.

Once we have raised the capital pledges, we expect the New York Episcopal Federal Credit Union to be up and running within 12 months.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the New York Episcopal Federal Credit Union (NYE FCU) and why is it needed now?

Based on a recent estimate, 10% of Americans are unbanked (no banking relationships) and another 25% are underbanked, meaning they have either a checking or savings account, but usually not both. Demographically, these groups tend to be younger, poorer and more than likely people of color.

Without access to traditional banking services, they're forced to rely on expensive alternative financial products/services to cash their paychecks, pay their rent and utilities, send money to their families and swipe a card (prepaid, of course) at a store or a gas pump. If they run short or there's an unexpected bill, high-interest payday loans are usually their only alternative.

Being unbanked costs individuals who can least afford it about \$3,000 per person per year, according to the Financial Health Network. These exorbitant fees and interest penalties don't count towards building credit, so the unbanked and underbanked are usually "credit invisibles."

New York Episcopal Federal Credit Union was conceived to begin to change this scenario for members of our parishes and communities.

Our credit union will be a sustainable financial institution that will meet the needs of the people and institutions in our Diocese with affordable loans, and banking services, and financial wellness seminars and counseling. We will make special efforts to reach out to the marginalized and unbanked among us who are not now welcomed by commercial banking institutions.

While there are some limitations as to who can join, any person who participates in any our parish outreach ministries (whether as a recipient or volunteer) may become a member of our credit union along with every member of our Episcopal parishes and institutions.

It is our intention to expand the membership criteria to be as broad as possible. For example, every guest of our feeding ministries, every family whose child comes to an after-school program, and every person who participates in any "outreach" ministry of an EDNY parish is within our field of membership. It will certainly be open to organizations and programs affiliated with our parishes and even those that just use our space.

Our credit union will be an ongoing demonstration of our commitment, as Episcopalians, to address financial inequality and to make reparations for the economic barriers erected by structural racism within our society.

How close are we and what do we need?

For the past seven years, our task force has been working to make the New York Episcopal Federal Credit Union a reality. Towards this end, the Episcopal Diocese of NY and Trinity Church Wall Street have pledged a total of \$500,000 as an initial capital contribution. A consultant was retained to assist us in developing a detailed business plan which is now pending before the NCUA (The National Credit Union Agency) the agency that oversees credit unions and issues charters.

Recently, the NCUA indicated that it was prepared to issue a charter, but would require an additional capital commitment of \$350,000.

Beginning this summer, we are launching a diocese-wide fund-raising campaign asking parishes and individuals to pledge toward our total goal of \$350,000. The pledges would be payable over a three-year period. Congregations of different sizes and different backgrounds may join as full partners at different levels.

Our campaign goal will be shared across 182 parishes and our nearly 40,000+ members. In addition to our parishes, we will be asking affiliated organizations and all parishioners to pledge as well.

Our goal is to complete the campaign by the end of September.

When we get it, what's next?

The initial years of the credit union development call for a cautious and conservative plan to ensure sustainability while we identify and begin to work with those in need of financial education and counseling.

In addition to our initial capital, our credit union expects to receive support — loans and other assets—from one affiliated organization as well as other banks and credit unions with Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) requirements.

In year one, we anticipate having two permanent rent-free locations: Trinity Commons, New York and at St. James Church, Fordham in the Bronx. We also expect to join the Co-Op Financial Services network that enables members to use over 30,000 ATMs nationwide, and over 5600 branch locations without charge.

The credit union will also set up virtual branches and pop-ups at parish events, particularly those tied to financial literacy or education. For example, most of our parishes have large

educational spaces which are potential training sites for financial literacy classes and can be used as new-member recruitment sites on a periodic basis. We will organize volunteer and paid representatives to visit these churches to educate and enroll community members into the credit union.

During the early stages of the credit union, we will be emphasizing online transactions.

Our initial product offerings will include:

- Signature loans
- Cashier's checks
- Payday loans
- Money orders
- Direct deposit
- Certificates of deposit

Our interest rates and fees will be significantly lower than alternative services.

In year-one, we will also start the credit union website and launch a Diocese-wide marketing campaign to recruit new members. Our plans also call for extensive use of social media (FaceBook, twitter and LinkedIn) to keep members and prospects aware of programs and local events.

Where will we be and what can we do in 5 years?

At the end of our first full year, we expect to be serving approximately 600 members. And at the end of five years, we expect to grow that number to 1500 or more.

We will be part of a national online network that will mean members can carry out basic banking functions in every part of the Diocese— from Staten Island to Saugerties.

Future offerings are expected to include:

- Internet banking
- Internet bill paying
- Wire transfers
- Financial counseling
- Vehicle loans

Pledging and campaign support

In the next few weeks, we will provide additional materials that can be distributed to your members and shared with community organizations.

Please let us know what you need to reach your congregation.