

Oasis Outreach Opportunity, Inc. Annual Report for 2021

Oasis Outreach Opportunity, Inc. (Oasis) is located in **4 Buildings in Akron, Ohio**: (1.) The Oasis Outreach facility located at 847 Crouse St., (2.) The Oasis Healing House I located at 1500 Sackett Hills Dr., (3.) Oasis Healing House II/Girl's Harmony House/ located at 828 East Exchange St. (adjacent to the Oasis Outreach facility's parking lot). (4.) The Oasis Healing House III/Harmony House Main located in the house adjacent to the Oasis Outreach facility.

In 2021 direct outreach shifted due to social distancing and isolation requirements of the COVID pandemic. Once COVID testing became available, staff met with individuals face to face for support and spiritual direction. In addition, contact and connections were nurtured online and through phone conversations. Hundreds of food products, household and hygiene items, and diapers were gathered from our church partners and distributed throughout the year. Items were generously donated by Faith Lutheran Church in Fairlawn, Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Brecksville and Zion Lutheran Church in North Canton.

Major Oasis accomplishments included the creation and launching of online curriculum for classes for youth and inter-generational use, called **Space for Grace**. In addition, with the support of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, **Oasis Mission Development** began with two ELCA Lutheran churches receiving funding, spiritual direction, and support: New Covenant Lutheran Church in East Cleveland and Holy Trinity Lutheran Church's DLM program in Akron.

1. Oasis Outreach facility 2021

Revised January, 2022

In 2021 collaboration continues to flourish in the Oasis Outreach facility. Harmony House Inc. expanded their staff and service for young adults, ages 18 to 26, experiencing homelessness. Harmony House Inc. staff and participants were served out of two classrooms on the second floor of the Oasis Outreach facility. In addition, Oasis provides support to Harmony House Inc. through the regular distribution of food, personal and household items.

Harmony House Inc. staff	4
Participants	26
Total	30+

Work was completed on the outside grounds of the Oasis Outreach facility thanks to a matching Akron Façade Grant from the City of Akron. New asphalt parking lot, tree removal and lighting added safety and beauty to the outside of our main facility.

After the departure of the daycare, Oasis staff cleared and cleaned the building. In 2021 prayerful discussion began with Citizens Akron Church, who is interested in developing in 2022 an after-school program for youth 3rd, 4th, 5th graders at Mason Learning Center located down the street.

2. Oasis Healing House I 2021

The Oasis Healing House I was at full capacity with 5 young adults in 2021. Young adult occupants continue to live in community sharing leadership and tasks. The people who resided in the Oasis Healing House I in 2021 include: Young adult occupant 1, who has her BA in Social Work and got a full-time job working at the Cleveland Clinic in Akron this year. Young adult occupant 2, who has graduated from the University of Akron with a Multi-disciplinary degree in Anthropology and Social Work, works full-time at Oasis. Young adult occupant 3

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graduated in December 2021 and is now pursuing her Masters in Speech Pathology. Young adult occupant 4 is learning the construction trade and works full-time. Young adult occupant 5, age 21, plans to study engineering at the University of Akron in 2022. A total of 8 different Young Adult Occupants (and 2 older adult occupants) have resided at the Oasis Healing House I since its inception in May of 2017.

A shared leadership model continues for occupants as the young adults lead small groups based on their passions and gifts. Compliance with COVID pandemic isolation restrictions limited participants and frequency. However, a total of **39 young adults** participated in Small Groups in 2021, which included: Movie Nights, Baby Shower, Game Nights, Girls Night, Recovery Leadership Development and Guys Night.

OASIS HEALING HOUSE I SMALL GROUPS IN 2021

Activity	Times gathered
Girls Night	6
Movie Nights	Regularly
Recovery Leadership	12
Baby Shower	1
Guys Night	1

In 2021 a chicken coop was built out of existing materials on the grounds of the Oasis Healing House I. Five chickens began to live in community at the Oasis Healing House property! Vegetables are grown in raised beds. An apple tree was also planted.

3. 828 East Exchange St.

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Full capacity at the Girl's Harmony House at 828 East Exchange St. was maintained throughout 2021. The house is continually filled with 4 young women, ages 18-26, supported by Oasis and managed by Harmony House Inc. A resident advisor and case managers provide direction and ongoing guidance. Oasis provides on-site support, groceries, and personal items to occupants in the Girl's Harmony House at 828 East Exchange St.

4. The House Adjacent to the Oasis Outreach facility – Harmony House Inc.

After Sheltercare moved its SOS operation to the northside in their former Safe Landing Shelter for boys, Oasis finished renovation early in 2021. Harmony House Inc. moved in 5 young adult men in need of stable housing in 2021.

2021 Oasis support of young adult college students.

Oasis continues to support 2 college students at Kent State University. Past graduates include: Sam with a Multi-Disciplinary degree in Anthropology and Social Work in 2020, Bridget with a BA in Speech Pathology and Audiology and a minor in autism spectrum disorders from Kent State University, Jenny with a BA in Social Work from the University of Akron and Noah with an Associate Degree from Mercyhurst.

Oasis Online Engagement

Additional online engagement was developed through the creation of the Oasis curriculum – SPACE FOR GRACE CLASS, which consists of 31 weekly modules. Although the classes are designed for older youth and young adults, people of all ages are encouraged to enroll. In addition, “Speak in the Creek” are spiritual messages recorded and launched from a

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creek setting and centered on “Healing Heroes” created and designed by Oasis staff.

Oasis Mission Development

The mission of Oasis expanded to create additional opportunities for outreach to marginalized youth and young adults in Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) churches of the Northeastern Ohio Synod (NEOS) and ELCA full communion partners in Northeastern Ohio.

Goals for Oasis Mission Development are to:

- 1. Increase additional outreach in the existing congregations across Northeastern Ohio who are willing to extend grace to marginalized youth and young adults.** Marginalized groups include but are not limited to people facing hunger, housing and economic challenges, people of color, those whose primary language is other than English, LGBTQ+, and students experiencing stress.
- 2. Mobilize Diverse Oasis leadership teams to spend time with congregations to help to discern how they can add or expand community outreach to marginalized youth and young adults.** This model allows for relationship building among diverse people to lead the effort toward authentically diverse ministries.
- 3. Discern with congregations where they have the Grace, Space, and at least one enthusiastic Face (someone with the passion to work with youth and young adults) to take the next natural step toward adding outreach ministries to the marginalized youth and young adults in the community.** Because God’s grace is continually flowing, people can catch on to the current of God’s presence at the points of need in a community and build relationships there with God and each other.

Oasis Mission Development Assistance

1. Funding

Oasis provides financial funds to support the mission of each congregation willing to discern where the Holy Spirit and the energy of God’s people are leading them for outreach to marginalized youth and young adults in their communities. Churches participating in Oasis

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Mission Development are eligible to receive funding both for their outreach ministry and to help sustain their current staff and building expenses, if needed. At least 15% of total funding must go directly to the youth and young adults.

Oasis Mission Development began in 2021 with:

1. **New Covenant Lutheran Church in East Cleveland -- hip-hop worship service.**
2. **DLM food distribution in Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Akron.**

Oasis also received an initial Letter of intent from **Martin Luther Lutheran Church, Youngstown for their urban farming outreach.**

Oasis Food and Personal item Distribution

Oasis continues to distribute food and toiletries to 5 houses and 10 apartments and diapers on an as needed basis. In addition, 1200 boxes of Girl Scout Cookies were donated in Kathy Moock's honor. Cookies were distributed to homeless population, families on the east side neighborhood, 26 current residents of the Harmony Houses, NA participants, and college students in the healing house on the north side.

Other Activities Included:

1. Deacon Deb Metzger provided spiritual direction, grief work and house blessings.
2. Pastor Lisa Arledge preached at St. Mark Episcopal in Wadsworth, Canaan Lutheran Church in Canaan, Faith Lutheran Church in Lorain, and First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Plymouth.
3. Pastor Lisa Arledge attended Akron/Wooster Conference Meetings and a GAR Foundation community lunch.

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4. Online/in-person retreats included:

Shalom Peer Group	Deacon Deb Metzger
Continuing Education Seminar	Deacon Deb Metzger
Conservation and Community	Deacon Deb Metzger
Northeastern Ohio Synod	Pastor Lisa Arledge and Deacon Deb Metzger
Anam Cara	Deacon Deb Metzger