

Oasis Outreach Opportunity, Inc. Annual Report for 2022

Oasis Outreach Opportunity, Inc. (Oasis) is located in **four 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.) **Girl's Harmony House/ Oasis Healing House II** located at 828 East Exchange St. (adjacent to the Oasis Outreach facility's parking lot), (4.) **Harmony House Main/ Oasis Healing House III** is located in the house adjacent to the Oasis Outreach facility. In 2022 ministry flourished. Four full-time Oasis staff met with individuals and small groups for support, bible study, prayer, activities, spiritual direction, collaboration, and work projects. Contact and connections also continued online and through phone conversations. 250+ relationships were nurtured in 2022 (54 youth, 61 young adults, 131 adults, 10 pastors). Food and hygiene items, household goods 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.

Collaborations include Oasis' relationship with Harmony House, Inc.'s ministry with young adults experiencing homelessness and Citizens Akron's after school program for elementary students from Mason CLC Elementary School. Relationships also continue among Oasis and other local ELCA churches and businesses in northeastern Ohio.

Oasis Mission Development continues with New Covenant Lutheran Church in East Cleveland and Holy Trinity Lutheran Church's DLM program in Akron. In addition, Oasis began an Oasis Mission Development relationship with Martin Luther Lutheran Church in Youngstown in spring of this year.

1. Oasis Outreach facility 2022

In 2022 collaboration continued to flourish in the Oasis Outreach facility with Harmony House Inc. expanding their staff and services for young adults, ages 18 to 26, experiencing homelessness. Harmony House Inc. staff and participants utilized space in four classrooms on the second floor of the Oasis Outreach facility. In addition, Oasis continues to provide support to Harmony House Inc. through the regular distribution of food, personal and household items. Harmony House has 26 beds in the community at any given time.

Harmony House Inc. staff	6
Participants	26*
Total	32+

*At any given time, Harmony House Inc. has room for 26 residents. The actual total number of participants in 2022 is more than 26, and is dependent on length of stay, which varies based on success.

In June of 2022 Citizens Akron Church began renovating the first floor of the Oasis Outreach facility. An after-school program for elementary youth at Mason Learning Center began in September of this year. The outreach was launched with 15 students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade. In addition, Vincent House also offers basketball for high school students on Friday nights.

2. Oasis Healing House I 2022

The Oasis Healing House I continued to be at full capacity with five young adults until May of 2022. By May four young adult occupants moved out to purchase homes of their own. Two young men continue to live in community as they attend college (University of Akron and Stark

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State College in Akron). Nine 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** continued for the first six months of 2022. The young adult residents led small group gatherings based on their passions and gifts. In addition to occupant-led activities, Oasis staff began leading healing activities at the Oasis Healing House in June of 2022. Word and Sacrament are offered on Sunday mornings followed by a hot meal together. A candlelight Christmas Eve service was also offered at 5:00 PM this year. In the last six months of 2022, 22 people attended Word and Sacrament (3 young adults, 7 youth, and 12 adults). Average attendance at Word and Sacrament gatherings on Sundays was five. Bible studies, spiritual support, family gatherings, and prayer were held throughout each week. Volunteers gathered for work projects throughout the second half of the year. 50 people of all ages participated at gatherings of all types at the Oasis Healing House in 2022 (10 youth, 17 young adults, and 23 adults).

OASIS HEALING HOUSE I SMALL GROUPS IN 2022

Activity	Times gathered
Girls Night	6
Movies	13
Recovery Leadership	6
Guys Night	1
Word and Sacrament	27
Bible Study/Prayer	Regularly
Work Projects	Regularly

The chickens moved out in the late summer of 2022 due to the need for more consistent daily care. Vegetables (peppers, tomatoes, parsley, strawberries, and cherry tomatoes), grown in raised

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beds, were distributed to Oasis participants, Oasis Healing House I young adults, and Harmony House residents.

3. 828 East Exchange St.

Full capacity at the Girl's Harmony House at 828 East Exchange St. was maintained throughout 2022. The house is continually filled to capacity with four young women, ages 18-26, managed by Harmony House Inc. and supported by Oasis. 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.

Harmony House Inc. provides five young adult men formerly experiencing homelessness with stable housing at any given time in 2022. This five-bedroom house is at full capacity throughout the year with residents and provides an administrative office space for Harmony House Inc. Oasis provides supportive services and financial support to this house's continued operation.

2022 Oasis support of college students.

Oasis continues to support three college students (Kent State University, University of Akron, and Stark State College – Akron). Past degrees earned by Oasis participants include a Multi-Disciplinary degree in Anthropology and Social Work in 2020, a Master's in Speech Pathology from Kent State University, a BA in Speech Pathology and Audiology and a minor in Autism Spectrum Disorders from Kent State University, a BA in Social Work from the University of Akron and an Associate Degree from Mercyhurst in Pennsylvania.

Oasis Educational Content

“Healing Heroes,” whimsical superheroes created and designed by Oasis staff, convey the story of Elijah from the Old Testament. These eleven heroes, who offer healthy and spiritual guidance through difficult times, are shared through graphic art and distributed to children of all ages through coloring pages.

Oasis Mission Development

The mission of Oasis continues to share resources and guidance with other churches 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

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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 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 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.

2022 Oasis Mission Development:

- 1. New Covenant Lutheran Church in East Cleveland -- Hip-hop worship service**
- 2. Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Akron. – DLM food distribution**
- 3. Martin Luther Lutheran Church in Youngstown -- Urban farming outreach**

Oasis Board members and staff traveled twice to Martin Luther Church in Youngstown to tour the urban farm and meet with Pastor Jeremy Hollingshead. Total annual financial support in 2022 is \$43,200.00.

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Oasis Food and Personal item Distribution

Oasis continues to distribute food and personal items to Harmony House's five houses and ten apartments and on an as needed basis. Other recipients include Oasis families with children, NA participants, and college students in the Oasis Healing House I on the north side. Items are generously donated by Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Brecksville, Faith Lutheran Church in Fairlawn, and Zion Lutheran Church in North Canton.

Spiritual Care

Oasis staff participate in faith formation with people of all ages. Spiritual care includes healing activities, prayer, and bible study. Pastor Lisa Arledge provides hospital visits and transportation.

In addition, in 2022 she preached and presided at worship 15 times in surrounding ELCA

Churches:

1. Canaan Lutheran Church, Creston
2. Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church, Brecksville
3. Faith Lutheran Church, Fairlawn
4. Zion Lutheran Church, North Canton
5. Messiah Lutheran Church, Akron
6. Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Canton
7. Zion Lutheran Church, New Middleton

Pastor Lisa officiated at one wedding and two funerals for Oasis participants and their families.

She also provided a pet blessing at Messiah Lutheran Church in Akron.

Deacon Deb Metzger provides spiritual direction and grief work. Her support extends to 33 individuals in person and online. Deacon Deb designs and provides online and in-person retreats, including one retreat lasting 30 days.

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1. Online retreats and continuing education:

Shalem Peer Group	Deacon Deb Metzger
EcoSpirituality	Deacon Deb Metzger
Conservation and Community	Deacon Deb Metzger
Soul of Wellness	Deacon Deb Metzger
Anam Cara	Deacon Deb Metzger

Oasis Staff

Four full-time Oasis staff share leadership and responsibilities. Staff provide spiritual support for participants and their families 24/7. Relationship building among Oasis collaborative partners and participants is extended through all staff. All spiritual materials are created and designed by Oasis staff. After the shift from five residents to two residents at the Oasis Healing House I occurred in May of 2022, Oasis staff divided into two teams to divide responsibilities among the four Oasis buildings. In addition, the 24/7 security of all buildings continues to be shared among all staff.

Oasis Board

Many thanks to our Oasis Board for their ongoing support and commitment:

Andy Moock, Brecksville -- President

Karen Shepherd, Wadsworth -- Secretary

Kemp Boyd, Akron Kenmore

William Brown, East Cleveland

Lesli Eisenhart, Barberton

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Jan Romance, Brecksville – Past Secretary

Carol Whidden, Cuyahoga Falls