



seeds of change

lutheran metropolitan ministry

Spring 2021 Volume XXVII, Issue 2

New Name, New Programs Same Commitment to Youth Success

Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry (LMM) is pleased to announce that our youth programming area was renamed **Youth Resiliency Services (YRS)** in late 2020, replacing the former name of Next Step. LMM's youth programs' leadership team spent the last couple years working to strengthen and realign its services with the changing needs in our community. The name Youth Resiliency Services was selected for this area of our mission to better reflect the goals and programmatic approach to our commitment to youth.



**re-sil-i-ence:
the capacity
to recover
quickly from
difficulties;
toughness.**

Youth Resiliency Services takes a holistic approach to supporting youth facing an adverse life experience by providing trauma informed behavioral health and physical health services, case management and shelter. The program includes a Youth Shelter and an Independent Living continuum of care for transition age youth to gain core life skills and become self-sufficient within the community. Services help prevent homelessness, provide respite and support transition planning to help youth progress toward independence.

With the rebrand of YRS, LMM has also enhanced the programs and services available to youth. In

2020, the youth shelter (formerly known as Westhaven) became a basic center, which allows LMM to accept youth ages 13 to 17 in need of shelter in addition to those referred by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

Last month, LMM was selected by A Place for Me to operate a drop-in center for youth and young adults experiencing housing instability in Cuyahoga County. In addition to meeting immediate and basic needs in a respectful manner that honors the dignity of every young person, the drop-in center will serve as a critical access point to housing resources as well as other services to support the social, emotional and physical well-being of young people. Drop-in centers are essential elements of a systemic approach to prevent and end youth homelessness.

For more information about LMM Youth Resiliency Services or to support our mission in this area, visit lutheranmetro.org/youth-services.



The Never-Ending Fight for Fair Housing

Every April, LMM joins local and national allies in recognizing National Fair Housing Month. Through our work in Housing & Shelter, we continue to advance equity in housing and to address the persistence of discriminatory practices.

Housing discrimination is woven deep within the fabric of our country: colonial “slave codes” (and later “Black codes”) restricted property ownership based on race; broken treaties and forced relocation limited the housing rights of Indigenous people; and women were excluded from property ownership. After abolition, segregation proliferated through Jim Crow laws (and similar laws in the North). Federal fair housing protections introduced in 1866 made racial housing discrimination *technically* illegal but provided little recourse. Instead, segregation was legally upheld for the next hundred years, including the practice of “redlining” and restrictive covenants.

Finally, in 1968 – in response to Dr. King’s assassination and the Holy Week Uprising – the Fair Housing Act was passed on April

11. The Act ostensibly outlawed housing discrimination based on race, color, religion, and national origin. Later decades brought amendments for sex, disability, and family status, plus legislation addressing enforcement, reporting, and lending.

Despite such progress, we have much more work to do. Today, segregation maps eerily mirror century-old redlining maps. Black people represent 13% of the population, yet 40% of people experiencing homelessness. Of the estimated two million annual instances of housing discrimination nationwide, only 2% are reported to HUD.

Beyond overt housing discrimination, insidious forms of currently legal discrimination are proven to serve as proxies for

Giving is Helpful to the Receiver, Healing for the Donor

You may not consider yourself a “philanthropist,” but if you give to increase the well-being of others, that is exactly what you are. The size of your gift doesn’t matter; it is your “love for humanity” that makes you a philanthropist.

As we write our checks or make donations online, we do so hoping to make a difference, to make someone else’s burdens a bit easier to bare, and to make second chances possible. It is a gracious and healing experience, to support an unfulfilled need in our community, for the receiver and for the donor as well.

Being intentional about giving can be very impactful. At LMM, we want to support you in making good decisions about charitable giving. Here are some questions we encourage you to consider as you make plans to give to your charity of choice.

How do you show love for humanity?

What inspires you to give?

What is your vision for improving our community and our country?

Can a gift to LMM or other organizations improve the lives of others?

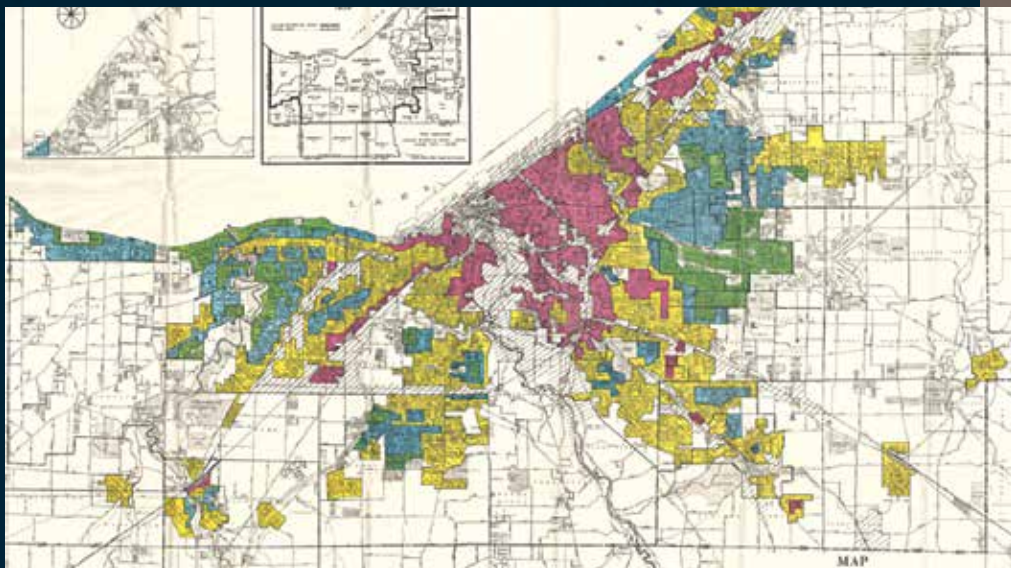
To learn more about our mission, impact and programs, visit lutheranmetro.org. There, you will learn about the many ways your generosity is making a difference in the lives of people who are oppressed, forgotten, and hurting.

To discuss your interest in supporting LMM, contact Kate Maver, our Director of Development at 216-658-7204 kmaver@lutheranmetro.org. We’d love to hear from you!



racial discrimination. Prospective renters and homeowners are consistently denied housing based on source of income, history with the criminal justice system, credit, and past eviction. These practices exacerbate wealth inequality, health disparities, and segregation.

Today our fight for fair housing takes many forms: contributing research on collateral sanctions in public housing; advancing Source of Income protections and Pay to Stay legislation at the local level; opposing federal rollbacks in fair housing enforcement regulations; and creating innovative housing models for people who simply cannot find a place to live anywhere else. LMM imagines a future where housing is finally and resolutely upheld as a universal right.



Map of Northeast Ohio communities impacted by the discriminatory practice of “redlining.”

LMM's 2021 Advocacy Priorities

In 2021, LMM's priorities include ending homelessness, reforming the criminal justice system, promoting health and wellness, and advancing racial equity. We will accomplish these goals by focusing on advocacy and policy change at the local level. By looking for local solutions to larger societal challenges, we believe that we can have a direct and long-term impact on the challenges that face the people we serve.

In 2021, Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry will advocate for funding that lessens the harm done by the pandemic to the communities LMM serves, for policies that address racism in all forms, and for systems change that support the following outcomes:

- Homelessness be rare, brief and non-reoccurring, and that individuals who are experiencing homelessness be treated with dignity and respect. Individuals, families and youth experiencing homelessness should have access to safe shelter, behavioral health supports, and the social services necessary to move toward stability and, when appropriate, independence.
- Justice-involved individuals be provided second chances and that upon completion of their sentence, their rights should be fully restored. By having full and fair access to employment, housing, health care, insurance, education and civic engagement, returning citizens are able to move toward stability and normalcy.
- Senior citizens be treated with respect, and kindness, and provided access to high-quality and affordable health care and behavioral health care. This is especially important for those who have limited financial resources and are aging with a severe mental illness, or dementia, including Alzheimer's.

- That recognize our nation's legacy of racism and segregation and how it directly influences policies related to housing, criminal justice and health care. To move our nation forward, we must first acknowledge our past and craft policy solutions that both overcome this legacy of racism and advance equitable solutions that benefit all citizens.

Through this work, in partnership with program participants, the LMM Staff Advocacy Committee, the LMM Board of Director's Advocacy Committee, and the Racial Justice Task Force, LMM will contribute to a stronger community with more equitable opportunity for all. To read our full 2021 Advocacy Priorities, check out <https://www.lutheranmetro.org/advocacy/>.



Despite the Pandemic, We Can't Stop, We Won't Stop

In March of 2020, volunteer work at LMM was suspended, in-person meeting was put to a halt and changes in the times called for changes in the way LMM delivered services. For LMM's Workforce Development program, this meant they could no longer have the help of volunteers in Central Kitchen, they could no longer host in-person culinary training classes and they would now be providing meals to many new locations throughout Northeast Ohio. While these changes were unexpected, our Workforce team stood strong behind their motto, "Can't stop, won't stop."

Since March of 2020 to date, LMM's Central Kitchen has served over 500,000 meals to individuals experiencing homelessness in Northeast Ohio. Central Kitchen has expanded its reach to now serve three meals a day to not only the Men's Shelter, but to five hotel hubs across the Greater Cleveland area. Between our different sites, over 3,300 individuals who are homeless have been recipients of the meals. In the words of LMM's Executive Chef, Scott Teaman, "When other places stopped doing what they were doing and asked us to up [our meal production], we didn't even blink and said yes."

This work is vital, but it couldn't be done without community partners. The Greater Cleveland Food Bank has been essential, as they regularly provide fresh fruits, vegetables, meats and more to Central Kitchen to help feed the need. The City Club of Cleveland's kitchen generously partnered with LMM to help prep and cook meals. Penzeys Spices came through with a huge donation of delicious spices. These are just a few of the many ways the community came together to help LMM serve people who are vulnerable.

In addition to changes in the kitchen, there were also changes in the classroom. LMM's culinary training courses could no longer be hosted in-person and required that our students and teachers pivot to distance learning. Despite these challenges, LMM was able to continue offering courses and even launch our new Associate's Degree program. In late 2020, we were able to celebrate the first ever individual to receive their associate degree from LMM, Pauletta Salinas!

Looking back over the past year, we're grateful to have been able to continue to serve the community and are excited for what's to come for those we serve through our Workforce Development program.



Food donations and supplies fuel our meal service to area homeless.



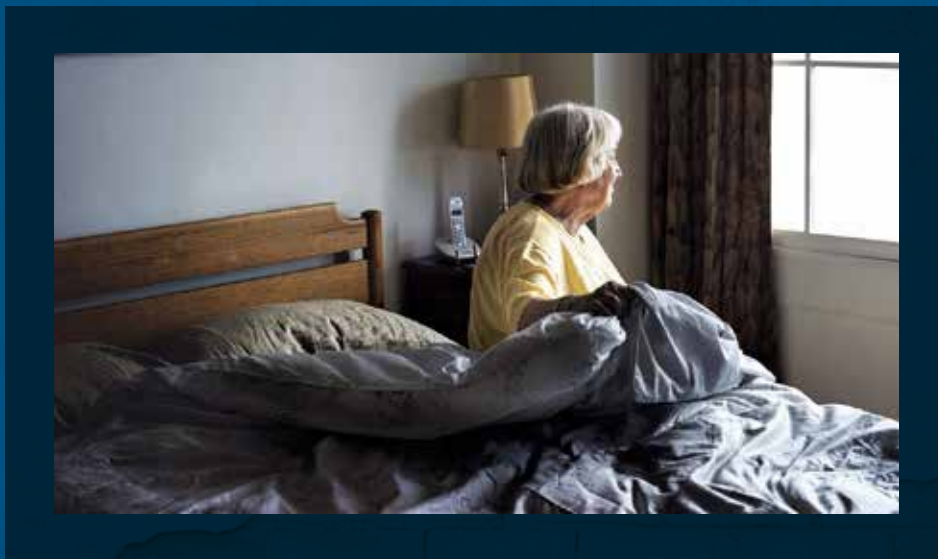
Meet Pauletta Salinas, our first associate degree graduate.

Coping with Isolation

Since the beginning of the pandemic in March of 2020, social isolation and mental health have become more of a concern than ever. Now that we're a year into this battle, vaccinations are becoming more widely available and restrictions have been pulled back slightly; however, many folks are still having to isolate and physically distance from loved ones. People of all ages are impacted by social isolation, and it's no secret that loneliness and seclusion can have some seriously negative impacts on one's physical and mental health. While it can be difficult, there are ways to combat loneliness and to ensure that you and your loved ones are taking care of themselves.

Social isolation and loneliness experienced by seniors can affect their health and well-being. However, during this time of staying close to home and avoiding crowded places to reduce exposure risk to COVID-19, national research polls show that loneliness has doubled for older adults in the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic in America. It is not all bad news, as other polls have found that technology has helped many people over 50 connect with others, and 59% reported using social media at least once a week and 31% used video chat at least once a week. More encouraging is that 75% of seniors polled noted that they are getting outdoors and exercising several times a week.¹ Though this poll is encouraging, the social isolation that many seniors have and will continue to experience during the pandemic will have lasting mental health effects. Below are a few tips to help alleviate some of the loneliness that our older loved ones might be going through now:

- Write an old-fashioned letter and begin a correspondence with a loved one
- Have a scheduled phone call or video chat so the family can look forward to daily or weekly conversations
- Create an exercise challenge with a friend or family member
- Read a book to the grandkids via video chat or phone
- Pick up an old hobby or start a new hobby
- Adoption of a new pet might just be the key to helping with the lonely days
- Reconnect with your church or church activities
- Reconnect with neighbors (more people are working or staying home)



Do you have children, teens or other adults who need help coping with social isolation? Please visit these resources for information on maintaining or improving your mental well-being during these difficult times.

- **COVID Coach** – An app which offers resources on coping strategies, well-being exercises, and guidance for dealing with loneliness (Developed by US Department of Veterans Affairs); although developed by the VA, it was designed for all and is free to the general public
- **farfromalone.com** – Provides tips, resources, and information on ways to reduce feelings of loneliness (Offered through Humana)
- **connect2affect.org** – Resources for improving loneliness and fostering connection during the pandemic (AARP)

¹ <https://labblog.uofmhealth.org/rounds/loneliness-doubled-for-older-adults-first-months-of-covid-19>



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Our Mission:

To promote shalom (peace, well-being) and justice (right relationships) through a Christian ministry of service and advocacy with those who are oppressed, forgotten and hurting.

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To add, delete or change your address, contact 216.696.1882 or mail@lutheranmetro.org.

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