



Seeds of Change

lutheran metropolitan ministry

2022 Volume XXVIII, Issue 2



**From our family to yours, we send you
warm holiday wishes and hope for a
happy, healthy new year!**

In Their Own Words

Our 2022 has been filled with support, positivity and life-changing moments.

LMM honors the lived experience of the people we serve. Many of the obstacles our program participants, residents, and neighbors face are the result of a lack of compassion, limited awareness, and unfounded public policy. We advocate for community members and leaders to fully realize and respond to the unique needs of people facing housing instability, food insecurity, a return to community

from incarceration, youth in crisis and adults in need of guardianship.

As we continue our efforts to restore dignity and hope to people who are oppressed, we are inspired by the stories from each area of service. When told in their own words, the testimonials from participants, volunteers and frontline staff speak volumes.

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HOUSING & SHELTER:

I was raised by my grandparents. My father (and my grandfather, too) were alcoholics. I am the black sheep of my family and my siblings don't keep in touch. I became homeless when my wife and I split up. She took everything and left me nothing. I had no friends, no job (I quit my job when I started taking care of my grandfather full time because he had Alzheimer's and then he died).

I've been at the shelter for six months. I have friends now and a whole lotta support that I've never known before. Mike (the coordinator of Gateway) is like a father to me and we've had lots of man-to-man talks. I never knew what that was like. I don't know how to talk to landlords or find services for myself. I got all that stuff here at the shelter. I help do clean up on a team and they are my friends as well as co-workers. I've learned a lot about myself being here. I've learned not to be afraid to ask for help. That's big for me. And also to help others. I've given my own clothes to guys that needed stuff more than me.

My goal is to get situated with income (SSI) and a place to live that I can maintain. I am close to getting housing as soon as my income gets settled. I could never have done this on my own. This place made all the difference and the people here have helped me more than family ever did.

– **Thomas P.**, Gateway Community, Men's Shelter



Thomas P., Shelter resident

ADVOCACY:



Lynn Schlessman, Volunteer Leader of Friend-to-Friend

*Reading the book suggested by the LMM Office of Advocacy, called *Becoming Ms. Burton*, by Susan Burton, was helpful to me. Hers is a story of injustice, yet more than that, it is a story of faith and hope and courage in the face of injustice. In my meetings with women and men in prison and hearing them tell their stories, I am changed. Burton's story reminded me that it is not enough to feel with or feel for those that have suffered, but that faith*

leads us to constantly work for a tomorrow that is filled with shalom – peace, wholeness, right relationships.

I am especially grateful for the opportunities for discussion with others who had read the book. Hearing what other staff partners are thinking about her experiences and their own was a great privilege, something that we have had less of since COVID. I have deep respect for many of my staff partners at LMM and treasure opportunities to learn from them. Discussing this book gave us a framework to share with one another and learn from one another.

– **Lynn Schlessman**, Volunteer Leader of Friend-to-Friend

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

As a child I was always in the kitchen with my grandmother helping her cook and bake for the family. I fell in love with cooking and baking.

I found out about LMM from family that were students at the time. They would post the dishes they prepared to their Facebook pages. I felt inspired to call to get the information and two weeks later I started culinary classes. I really enjoyed Chef Adam and Chef Rebekah's lectures and labs. I am forever grateful for their patience with me! I finished the program and to my surprise, at the graduation ceremony I was offered to work on the food truck as a staff member.

My time at LMM has been phenomenal. I became friends with my classmates, work with some great people, great supervisors, and met a lot of people while working on the food truck. I am forever grateful for the opportunity not only as an employee, but a student as well.

Thank you to LMM and everyone involved.

– **Warren Gray**, Culinary Training Program graduate



Warren Gray, Culinary Training Program graduate

YOUTH RESILIENCY SERVICES:



**Lisa Smith, Vice President,
Youth Resiliency Services**

Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, is carrying forward its ministry with a special project in partnership with YRS.

In February, members of the St. Luke's Service Committee contacted our Development Department to express interest in supporting teens receiving care at our Youth Emergency Shelter. LMM operates one of only a few emergency shelters for youth ages 13 to 17 who are awaiting placement in the foster care system or seeking respite from housing instability.

The Service Committee had an idea to send LMM gift cards from various retailers, so that when a youth residing at the shelter was celebrating a birthday, or staying with us over a holiday, they would feel valued and seen by a demonstration of radical hospitality and acknowledgment of their special occasion.

It is such a simple but very impactful concept. When a young person is with us over a holiday or on their birthday, we are helping them deal with unimaginable feelings of

I continue to be honored to lead the LMM Youth Resiliency Services (YRS) program, and am always thankful I get to witness acts of kindness that make our young people's lives easier. Specifically, I'm pleased to tell you about a group dedicated to making radical hospitality a reality at the youth shelter.

St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church (St. Luke's), a congregation located in

disappointment and abandonment. Something as simple as a birthday card or a gift card on Christmas can make a difference in their ability to process what they are feeling.

Service Committee members Pauline Ellis and Lori Heilmeier lead efforts to gather donations and gift cards from parishioners. Every couple months, Pauline and Lori mail the cards to LMM for distribution as needed to our youth shelter residents.

St. Luke's is celebrating 75 years of ministry this year and the church has challenged the congregation to perform 75 acts of kindness during the anniversary. St. Luke's hopes to brighten the birthday of 75 residents during their stay at LMM. Kindness can change the world one life at a time. We appreciate St. Luke's reaching out to our little corner of the world.

— **Lisa Smith**, Vice President, Youth Resiliency Services

For more information about the Birthday Card Project or ways to support Youth Resiliency Services, please contact our Vice President of Development & Communications, Marcella Brown at 216-658-7208 or mbrown@lutheranmetro.org.



GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES:

*I provide guardianship to *Sally, who was referred to LMM by Adult Protective Services. As her legal guardian, I stepped in to help Sally in her time of need and get her the comfort and protection she deserves during this tough stage of her life.*



Sally was living alone in a senior apartment building. She received a dementia diagnosis, which presented challenges to her living alone. With the loss of her memory, she began to forget to eat and was very thin. She was not taking her medications and had wounds on the back of her heels that she was not taking care of. Her apartment was very cluttered and she had molded food in her cabinets and refrigerator that she'd forgotten about.

She has a son, but Sally and I have not been able to reach him. I was able to get her moved into a skilled nursing facility and organize her finances so her needs are met. Sally is doing much better since receiving guardianship! Her wounds are completely healed. She's eating regularly and gaining weight, so her too-thin stature has returned to a healthy range. It's an honor to help her!

— **LMM Guardian**

**name changed for privacy*

Support a Strong Start to the New Year for LMM by Giving Today

Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry is an organization meeting the needs of some of our community's most vulnerable neighbors. Our commitment to innovations in social service delivery and advancing social justice is made possible by the life-changing support and generosity of people like you. As we bring this year to a close, we ask you to partner with us by making an investment within one of our program areas that will position LMM for a strong start in 2023.

Here are the end of year areas of need LMM hopes to fund this Giving Season, to support our innovative programming and systems advocacy in 2023:

Youth Resiliency Services *Radical Hospitality Project*

\$20,000 left to raise for new computers in the media lab, and exercise equipment for the recreation space(s) at the Youth Emergency Shelter

Workforce Development's *Keep On Truckin Campaign*

\$15,000 left to raise of the \$20,000 needed to upgrade the Metro45 Food Truck

Housing & Shelter's *Innovations in Affordable Housing*

Gifts of any size to our Breaking New Ground campaign, that will allow us to support additional families exiting local shelters

Advocacy's *Advancing Fair Chances Initiatives*

Advocacy and awareness campaigns for Fair Chance Hiring and Housing

Guardianship Services *Senior Support Fund*

\$10,000 left to raise for the participant support fund, taking care of the unmet social and emotional supports of seniors under our care

In whatever way you can support LMM, know that the people on the receiving end of your generosity and gracious giving are extremely grateful!

If you are not in a position to support with an outright gift, consider these In Kind Donation and Volunteer Opportunities:

- Gift cards for our program participants and families, to meet their unique needs over the holiday season
- Become a volunteer for Guardianship Services; the next guardianship training will take place in early 2023
- Volunteer with Friend to Friend's Prison Ministry and support people in our community who are incarcerated
- Volunteer to host an activity, serve a meal or teach a new skill at the Men's Shelter at 2100 Lakeside Avenue

For more information on making a year-end donation, contact
Marcella Brown, Vice President of Development & Communications
216-658-7208 or mbrown@lutheranmetro.org.

Founder's Day 2023



The late Rev. Richard Sering,
founder of LMM.

In the 1960s, Rev. Richard Sering was called by the ELCA and the LCMS Lutheran church bodies to come to Cleveland and organize an effort that would seek justice and build right relationships in the community.

This request was made as a faith-based response to the civil unrest occurring in Cleveland's Hough neighborhood.

In 1969, Rev. Sering and his family officially moved to Cleveland from St. Louis, Missouri, to launch the initiative his organizing efforts helped create.

More than 53 years later, it is now known as Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry.

Please mark your calendars for our Founder's Day celebration on Thursday, February 2, 2023. Stay tuned for more details via our e-news.

To join our e-news list, visit lutheranmetro.org.

Cold weather is here and...

GIVING SEASON IS UPON US!

What better way to support Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry than by donating essential items to the individuals we serve? Donate via LMM's Amazon Wish List to make a gift this holiday season. Or consider a donation to the Men's Shelter at 2100 Lakeside. The shelter is looking for cold weather gear, including new or gently used coats, boots, sweatshirts, and sweaters.

Please contact mail@lutheranmetro.org to inquire about donating to the Men's Shelter.



amazon smile

When making a donation through the Amazon Wish List, be sure to use www.smile.amazon.com and **choose LMM** as your charitable organization! This is the same Amazon that you know and love, except Amazon donates 0.5% of your purchase to an organization of your choice when your order is made!





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