

Outreach Commission Report 2022

Jesus said: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” - Matthew 22: 38 - 40

In 2022, the Outreach ministries of St. Paul’s supported the parish’s efforts to do the work of love in this world. By following this holy command to love, we help to meet the ever-changing needs of our community. But, this work also transforms our relationships with God and one another, and even our own hearts. We thank you for your participation in this ongoing work!

This Spring, St. Paul’s Outreach Commission donated \$1,000 to the [Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh Garden Grants program](#). These grants support Episcopal parishes and organizations in the Diocese of Pittsburgh to create new vegetable gardens or to support already functioning gardens with small material needs. The produce that is grown is distributed through local food pantries and organization-based outreach efforts.

This summer, St. Paul’s also provided support for ARYSE, The Alliance for Refugee



Youth Support & Education, who sent St. Paul’s their thanks for our support!

Earlier this year, ARYSE provided a wish-list to the church with necessary supplies

and materials for its 5-week summer program, PRYSE Academy. As a grassroots organization, ARYSE often depends on community donations for our programs, and we truly could not have pulled off such a tremendous and successful summer experience for our students without the help and giving spirit of St. Paul's. Thank you to everyone who helped make PRYSE Academy 2022 so incredible and thank you to St. Paul's for helping to make Pittsburgh a more welcoming place where everyone can belong and thrive!



This Summer, the Outreach Commission provided a \$500 scholarship to Collin Mukisa, a medical student at Kampala International University in Uganda. Collins grew up being cared for at [the St. Paul and Rose Orphans' Care Center](#) in Buwala, Uganda and hopes to continue caring for his local community, as his community has cared for him.

In October, St. Paul's concluded [a campaign for RIP Medical Debt](#). The weight of medical debt affects one in three Americans, resulting in bankruptcy, delayed medical

care, and an inability to meet basic needs. RIP Medical Debt buys this debt for pennies on the dollar using donations. Then, people receive letters that their debt has been erased - and just like that, they're free of medical debt. We **surpassed** our campaign's goal, collecting \$17,652.93, plus a \$15,000 matching grant, for a total of \$32,652.93! This means *over three million dollars of medical debt was forgiven*. This constituted nearly **all** the available medical debt in Allegheny County at the time of the campaign!



St. Paul's collected gifts in November and December for its annual Angel Tree. Items were collected for [Hello Neighbor](#), [Agape Heart International](#), [the Sto Rox Family Center](#), [Hosanna Industries](#), [the Carnegie Family Center](#), [Jeremiah's Place](#), [the Neighborhood Resilience Project](#), [Holy Family Institute](#), as well as several local refugee families. We collected 407 presents, including

several last-minute emergency requests, and a number of gifts that needed to be purchased and delivered within two weeks of the tags being made available. The approximate value of these gifts was \$16,280.

Parishioners at St. Paul's also continued its letter-writing ministry to incarcerated men serving life sentences without parole. The Prison Letter Ministry is a way of putting into practice Jesus' teachings in the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 25, which calls on us to visit the prisoner.



St. Paul's parishioners donated food for the [South Hills Food Pantry](#) - especially through our Reverse Advent Calendar, during which parishioners purchased and delivered bags of 25 food staples.



Volunteers shopped for, packed, and delivered 120 packed lunches for the [Neighborhood Resilience Project](#) on the first Saturday of every month.



We held two major Outreach fundraisers this year – our Fish Fries, and Harvest Fest Dinner. Thank you to John Sozansky and all the volunteers that helped in both of those very successful (and delicious) events! St. Paul's

volunteers also helped cook and serve a Christmas Day meal to our neighbors in need as St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Carnegie, and during the year for [The Table at Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community](#).



Other Outreach collections included Halloween candy, which was packed by the parish at our Ministry Fair for [Meals on Wheels](#), and menstrual hygiene supplies, for [St.](#)

[John's Free Fridge](#). St. Paul's parishioners participated in a 5K fun run / walk for [Neighborhood Resilience Project](#) in May. Additionally, St. Paul's loaned our church van to [Hello Neighbor](#), to use in transporting newly arrived refugee families to their new homes.



In August, St. Paul's hosted a blood drive for the [Red Cross](#), and provided 35 units of badly-needed blood products.



Our First and Second Grade Sunday School Classes collected can openers for [Trinity Walk-In Ministry](#).

In December, the Vestry approved a **disbursement of \$15,000 in total** to the following organizations:

[South Hills Food Pantry](#) - \$2,000

[Jubilee Soup Kitchen](#) - \$2,000

[SHIM Family Center](#) - \$1,000

[Hello Neighbor](#) - \$1,000

[ARYSE Pittsburgh](#) - \$1,000

[Trinity Cathedral Walk – In Ministry](#) - \$2,000

[Hosanna Industries](#) - \$1,000

[Neighborhood Resilience Project](#) - \$1,000

[Agape Heart International](#) - \$1,000

[Shepherd's Heart](#) - \$1,500

[Jeremiah's Place](#) - \$1,000

[St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church Community Christmas Dinner](#) - \$500

The vision of the St. Paul's Outreach Commission is to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and love our neighbor. Thank you to everyone who donated, pledged, prayed, volunteered, or in any other way supported this mission!

Summary of 2022 Year-End Distributions

South Hills Food Pantry: \$2,000: [South Hills Food Pantry](#) provides food to people in the South Hills requiring the services of a food pantry but who have limited mobility or are without transportation. The Food Pantry delivers right to the door! Sponsored by [Southminster Presbyterian Church](#) and St. Paul's Episcopal Church, the Food Pantry is completely staffed and run by volunteers. It is fully supported by donations of food and monetary gifts, including our donations on Food Pantry Sundays the first Sunday of each month.

Jubilee Soup Kitchen: \$2,000: [Jubilee Soup Kitchen](#) offers a hot mid-day meal to all guests, 365 days a year, and fosters a community of respect and encouragement among guests and volunteers. Through the years, Jubilee Association formed to address additional needs of our guests and to serve our neighborhood, especially children, to break the cycle of poverty, saving them from ever needing to utilize the Kitchen.

SHIM Family Center - \$1,000: SHIM (South Hills Interfaith Movement) provides family support to our neighbors, including refugees and immigrants. [SHIM Family Center](#) is free to all families with children up to age five and provides home visits, child development screenings and group activities to families in need. Families also participate in field trips, discussions with guest speakers, a weekly Family Group, and monthly Family Council meetings. These activities allow families to spend time together, foster community and provide opportunities for English language development.

Hello Neighbor: \$1,000: [Hello Neighbor](#) is committed to supporting Pittsburgh's newest neighbors, recently resettled refugee families. Hello Neighbor works to

improve the lives of recently resettled refugee and immigrant families by matching them with dedicated neighbors to [guide and support](#) them in their new lives.

ARYSE - \$1,000: ARYSE is the premiere out-of-school-time resource for immigrant and refugee youth. ARYSE programs currently serve youth in grades 6-12 who reside in Allegheny County, representing over 15 different countries of origin and speak 30+ different languages. In addition to [PRYSE Academy](#), current program offerings include an arts-focused [Girls Art and Maker Group](#), academic and career readiness programs, [After School Club and Future Planning Workshops](#), an advocacy and affinity group, [LGBTQ+ Initiative and Queer Youth Space](#), and a uniquely tailored program to help recently resettled youth from Afghanistan, [Empowered Afghan Youth](#).

Trinity Walk-In Ministry- \$2,000: Trinity Cathedral's Walk-in Ministry provides the most vulnerable among us food, toiletries, clothing, and referral services. They participate along with four other downtown churches as members of the Downtown Ministerium. The volunteers listen to people, ask what they need, direct them to homeless shelters, food pantries, and other sources of service and assistance listed on a database (for example for a job search, acquiring an ID, getting furniture or clothing, transportation to medical appointments).

Hosanna Industries- \$1,000: [Hosanna Industries](#) was founded in 1990 as a faith-rooted, non-profit mission whose work involves a variety of charitable initiatives aimed at helping our impoverished neighbors. Mission workers at Hosanna Industries build and repair homes for needy households; mobilize relief workers to areas of disaster; teach and lead workshops in art and spirituality; train young people in construction skills; and lead volunteers of all ages. Hosanna relies on donations to help hundreds of needy neighbors per year.

Neighborhood Resilience Project- \$1,000: [Neighborhood Resilience Project](#) focus is on trauma-informed community development in Pittsburgh. They run a clothing and food pantry in the Hill District, a backpack feeding program, serve a hot meal once a week, have an emergency trauma response team that focuses on victims of gun violence, and a free volunteer-run health clinic.

Agape Heart International- \$1,000: [Agape Heart International](#) is a nonprofit with a mission to “support, nurture and empower individuals, families and communities of all ages to secure a better quality of life.” That includes humanitarian relief such as sending books, pencils, soap and donated clothing to orphans and refugees in Uganda; as well as supporting recently resettled refugee and immigrant families in the Pittsburgh area.

Shepherd’s Heart- \$1,500: [Shepherd’s Heart Fellowship and Veteran’s Home](#) is located near Mercy Hospital and focuses on the homeless veteran population. They have worship services on Sunday evenings, a drop-in center, clothing and food donations, a veteran's home, and many more services. St. Paul’s has been involved with Shepherd’s Heart for many years, preparing and serving meals several times a year for approximately 150 low-income men, women, and families, some of whom are homeless, some of whom just need a warm meal.

Jeremiah’s Place- \$1,000: [Jeremiah’s Place](#), Pittsburgh’s only crisis nursery, provides emergency care for children ages 0-6 for a few hours or a few days based on the needs of the family. Co-founded by one of our parishioners, the primary focus at Jeremiah’s place is to keep children safe and to provide a safe and supportive solution for families in need. Jeremiah’s Place is conveniently located in the East Liberty section of Pittsburgh and is staffed by trauma-informed caregivers and social workers. All

services provided by Jeremiah's Place are free, available 24 hours a day, and most importantly, judgment free.

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Carnegie, Christmas Meal- \$500: The Outreach Commission designated \$500 to support the [St. John's Christmas Day meal](#) this year, as well as coordinating volunteers to cook and serve the meal, drive people to the meal, and deliver meals to the homebound.