Wayside Cross Ministries



Stewardship Report 2022



James Lukose, Executive Director

Forget Not All His Benefits....Psalm 103:2

As followers of Christ, we are called to test ourselves to make sure we are in the faith throughout the different seasons and circumstances we face (2 Cor. 13:5). We are also admonished to trust God at all times (Ps. 62:8). It is Psalm 103 that reminds us to ponder all of the benefits we receive from the Lord's hand. A few of those benefits are forgiveness of sins, healing from diseases, redemption from various difficulties, and comfort in our afflictions.

As we are at the threshold of our 95th year at Wayside Cross Ministries (WCM), we cannot help but look back and be reminded of God's goodness. Truly, no matter how difficult the season, His benefits are rich towards those who remain faithful to His calling. As an organization, we have witnessed God's favor in the lives that have been transformed and through

the growth of our six ministry divisions. God continues to use WCM to reach people who are in need.

Through it all, we have been stretched and challenged in ways that only the Lord could have planned and executed. From the day our doors first opened in 1928, He has provided for the work here. We have experienced His faithful provision when He led us to acquire a new building for our Lifespring Ministry on College Avenue, as well as a brand new Adult Learning Center for our Master's Touch Ministry. Furthermore, we have rejoiced as the Lord provided a 21,000 square foot building in Elgin and a new four-story building to add to our New York Street Campus. He has been kind to us as we have been able to add two new discipleship homes for our Master's Touch graduates and three thrift stores to bless our communities, even a car detailing facility [Hope On Wheels] as a job-training opportunity for our residents.

We must not forget how faithful He has been. He has given us the ability to reach countless men and women in prisons and jails across the state with the love of Christ. He has led us to create a safe haven for addicted and abused women at the Lifespring Center. We are thankful for how He granted us the opportunity to minister to homeless and under-resourced individuals at the Elgin Wayside Center. Who could have imagined how impactful our Urban Youth Ministry would become for under-resourced and single parents as we provided their children with educational support and recreation, especially during a prolonged pandemic? Even still, God uses Wayside to give these kids a safe place to go while their parents work to keep a roof over their heads.

I never could have imagined I would get to witness God's power at work when I first walked through the doors of WCM 25 years ago. Looking back, I can say with certainty that the Lord has supported Wayside abundantly through the faithfulness of charitable donors like you, and for that we are eternally grateful.

As an organization that belongs to the Lord, we would like to thank you for playing a vital role in His work here. We hope and pray that your continued support will empower us to be a beacon of light and that many more lives would be transformed through the Gospel of Christ.

As you peruse these pages, we trust you will discover example after example of just how blessed and encouraged each of our six ministry divisions has been from your support. May you be reminded of Jesus' kindness as you gaze upon the redemption and hope that have been brought to countless numbers of souls here since 1928. We pray the Lord would bless your faithful partnership.

Thank you for all that you do in Christ's name.

MINISTRY IMPACT

Master's Touch Ministry

- 27 men graduated the Master's Touch program
- 3 men promoted to full-time resident assistants
- 3 men promoted to resident staff
- 39 men made professions of faith in Christ
- 165 men met weekly with a mentor
- 26 men found full time jobs

Lifespring Ministry

- 20 volunteers led weekly Bible-based and life skills classes
- 2 pastoral counselors met with residents on a weekly basis
- 20 mentors met weekly with assigned residents
- 25 residents entered the program; 5 residents graduated from the 6-month program
- 13 children joined the program alongside their mothers
- 4 residents made a profession of faith, and 13 residents grew in their faith
- 18 residents made significant improvements in their life skills
- II residents entered the workforce

Elgin Wayside Center

- 8 clients placed in life change programs
- 331 volunteers
- 5,824+ guest client sign-ins
- 101 new clients
- 4,710 lunches served
- 13,000 cups of coffee served
- 1,192 loads of laundry done
- 550 Bible studies conducted
- 2,926 showers taken

Hope Outreach

 Provides the men in the program daily, real-life work experience.
Enhancing or learning new skills in our warehouse, transportation department, maintenance shop, housekeeping department, Hope Chest Resale Store, Sweet Charity Resale Shop, Hope Chest Resale Store Elgin and Hope On Wheels

- Maintained 8 ministry vehicles with an average of 6,000 miles per month
- Scheduled, transported, sorted and refurbished over 500,000 donated items including clothing, furniture, household goods and other miscellaneous objects. These items were sold at the Hope Chest Resale Stores, Sweet Charity Resale Shop or distributed to under-resourced men, women and children in the community or within one of Wayside Cross' divisions
- Through our Community Outreach program and World Relief Aurora, we assisted local churches with 19 referrals for clothing and housewares
- 1,136 bales at over 800 lbs. each of clothing and 1,186 bags of shoes, for a total of 911,713 lbs. were recycled with the majority of those items going to third-world/ developing countries
- Partnered with 3 local churches to host Compassion Drives with the purpose of collecting clothes, furniture, and other household items that could be used in our Hope Chest Resale Stores as well as other areas of our ministries
- Operated 20 donation bins at partner churches, collecting 22,165 bags of donated clothing, weighing 487,630 lbs.
- Proceeds from our Hope Chest Resale Stores, Sweet Charity Resale Shop, and Hope On Wheels, along with our income from recycling clothing, shoes, and scrap metal totalled \$944,728, all of which went to fund the ministry efforts at Wayside Cross Ministries

New Life Corrections Ministry

- Went to Stateville Prison 50 times, with over 1,000 inmates visited
- Handed out 2,400 Bibles in jails and prisons
- Had over 80 volunteers come to our two prison training sessions
- Passed out over 13,000 Dads and Freedom From Fear brochures to inmates
- Passed out 1,000 books and pamphlets to inmates
- Opened up Sheridan Prison in July, doing Freedom From Fear Classes
- Opened up Kawanee Prison in December

Urban Youth Ministry

- If Students got to experience indoor skydiving for the first time
- 92 Volunteers gave approximately 1000 total hours of their time
- 107 Hours of Bible lessons were taught
- 200 Youth played in UYM's Aurora Neighborhood Baseball League
- 43 Hours of Tutoring and Homework help per student
- I15 Days of Free transportation to UYM programs for 75% of participants
- 18 Students attended a 5 day/4 night Bible Camp
- 623 Individual gifts were donated to our Christmas Merit Store
- 250 Collective volunteer hours were given by 25 UYM students

Board of Directors

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Jimmy Valadez - Client Services

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Sweet Charity Resale Shop Staff

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New Life Corrections Staff

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Master's Touch Steering Committee

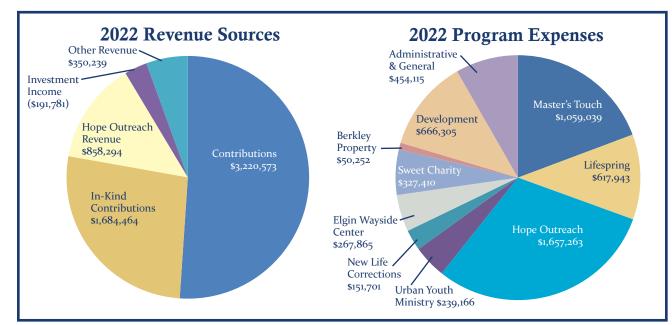
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Samantha Raeside - Program Assistant Robin Sterkel - Program Manager Hanna Wentzlaff - Program Assistant

UYM Steering Committee

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20 Volunteers Needed - One Hour Assignment

Every year at the start of our Annual Campaign we mail postcards regarding our Annual Campaign appeal, and we have found they really work. Last year we sent out over 4,200 cards. You probably received one. This year we would like to send out more and you can help.

We need volunteers to help out in August. You will address the postcard and add a brief message, either your own or one we supply. We need you or a group from your church to help.

Wayside will provide everything you need, cards and stamps. It only takes a little over an hour of your time. Wayside's growth over the years is due to the generosity of its supporters. A note from you and WCM is a good way to keep this going.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Birnie Harper, Annual Campaign Coordinator, at 630.723.3427 or by email at bharper@waysidecross.org

Charitable Bequests – A blessing for donors and Wayside Cross Ministries

Over the years, over 100 people have made a bequest to Wayside Cross Ministries. One third is used for operations, and two-thirds of the funds go into reserves for facility repairs and long term savings, used only at the discretion of our Board of Directors. The funds provide services during times when regular donations drop helping WCM plan for the future and ensure we serve for years to come.

In a recent survey, some of Wayside's donors said they support us because they felt blessed by God, that WCM was a good steward of their money, that giving was an act of faith, and they felt personally called. Your giving can be called an act of worship that ensures people's lives will be transformed.

You will be building a legacy. Leaving a charitable gift in your will creates a legacy that will outlive you. Romans 7 says that when we live and die in faith, "we can produce a harvest of good deeds for God."

For more information, visit our Christian will website: https://christianwill.org/waysidecross

God's Presence Felt at Resale Stores

It's been heard over and over from customers, volunteers, and residents that the atmosphere in our stores is pleasing, enjoyable, and peaceful.

God has gifted our stores with talented employees, each of whom possesses a unique giftedness that has been used to artistically beautify our stores. We hear from customers, weekly commenting on everything from how organized and clean the stores appear to how beautifully everything is displayed and even the peace they experience at the stores.

We have a large number of long-term, dedicated volunteers at Sweet Charity who weekly serve, organizing, cleaning, and helping to move merchandise, and who have a heart for our ministry. Many of our volunteers have commented on how much they enjoy serving at Sweet Charity. A local artist who wants to serve the ministry has been, routinely, bringing in her watercolor note cards for us to sell and painting pictures for us to use in displays. Presently we have two residents serving at the Hope Chest, and one recently stated that he didn't think it was an accident that he ended up serving at the store. He agreed that he felt God had led him there. He went on to say how much he enjoys the atmosphere at the Hope Chest.

God is using His people in key places to shine His light through the excellence of work, art, and connection to allow His presence to be felt at our stores.

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

Rose Sommerville Hope Chest Manager



His Benefits in the Master's Touch Program

Through almost 95 years, we look back to where we have been, and look forward to how the Lord will work in the lives of those that enter this program. One of those developments has been the Biblical Counseling Center, which operates on Thursdays in Master's Touch. Individuals are referred by their mentor or by staff.

Jim Lang the counselor in charge of the program, meets with five individuals and conducts small groups on many topics-anything from the heart to trauma to anger and bitterness. He has a significant background which makes him well-suited to counsel the men in the Master's Touch program.

Jim has spent the last 10 years working with men whose lives have been devastated by addictions, along with all the related consequences.

His ministry is grounded in the Word, and we have already seen him have an immediate impact on the men in our program.

Jon Beall Director, Master's Touch









Receiving God's Blessings in His Timing

Meet Dineah - a single mom to four children ages 14, 11, 5, and 3. Dineah arrived at Lifespring one year ago in January 2022 after leaving an abusive relationship. At that time, her children's father had absconded with her kids, and Dineah had to petition to regain custody of her children.

But the road ahead would not be easy for Dineah. Regaining custody required her to make multiple trips to the courthouse in Chicago from Aurora. She made a total of 12 trips into the city, carrying car seats for her two youngest on the train each time. After the first 11 trips, she returned to Lifespring empty-handed and broken-hearted, but she never gave up hope. "After the first few trips, I started to feel defeated," said Dineah. "But then I realized I had to wait for God to bring them to me in His way and in His timing."

Today, Dineah has full custody of the kids, and they are all under one roof, rebuilding a life together with the help of Lifespring. Not only has her family been restored, she is learning important life skills and Biblical truths.



"This program has helped me learn to be better organized, stick to a budget, and find ways to spend quality time with my kids without spending money," says Dineah. "My walk with God has grown in so many ways, and the kindness and compassion of the staff has allowed me to truly start over again."

God's blessings in Dineah's life are so clearly evident – not just in the smiling faces of her children, but in the beautiful fruit that has grown out of her faith.

Dana Kemp Director, Lifesping Ministry Center



His Everlasting Love Shines Through

The Bible is full of proclamations and demonstrations of the love of God. But to just say that God is love is somewhat of an understatement. I like to turn to Psalm 136 as a way to "dig down deep" to fathom the love of God. Here the Psalmist proclaims, "For His lovingkindness is everlasting" in every one of the 26 verses of this psalm. We are told at the beginning of the psalm and with the very last verse to "give thanks" for the steadfast love of the Lord.

This past year at Elgin Wayside Center (EWC) has been one in which the everlasting love of God has been demonstrated in all the blessings He has bestowed upon this ministry. He has showered Elgin Wayside Center with devoted, caring, and Christ-honoring staff and volunteers who help serve our clients, prepare and serve delicious meals, and deliver powerful Bible studies. Our "army" of volunteers and churches continue to be the lifeblood of this ministry, "ever present in time of need."

The fruit of this ministry and God's continual provision are seen in the successes experienced this last year. In March, we held a successful "Walk-a-Mile," event which was well attended and helped to raise awareness of the plight of the homeless during the bitter winter months. In June, enjoyment was had by all as we gathered on the property to hold our annual EWC Appreciation BBQ. Great God-honoring music was presented, a message from the Word was shared, outdoor games were played, and, of course, excellent food was eaten. This all helped to make it a wonderful day and to remind everyone of the Lord's faithfulness. Our Thanksgiving week dinner, Thanksgiving Day breakfast, and Christmas luncheon all proved to be a great time of fellowship and praise.

In October we held our annual Friendship Dinner. Dr. James Ford, longtime Pastor of Christ Bible Church in Chicago, gave an inspiring message that stirred the hearts of all in attendance. Musical performances by the Wheaton College Gospel Choir added to the success of the evening and served to give God the glory He deserves.

Many improvements were realized this past year. We finally replaced our "dying" convection oven with a larger, more efficient model. We also replace an exhaust fan in our kitchen, thanks to a dedicated gift from a gracious donor. We expanded the hours and presence of our staff this year, which helps to ensure full coverage throughout the week and to do even more to meet the ever-growing needs of the men and women we serve.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we have had multiple clients, struggling with life on the street, visiting our facility on a daily basis, who reached a point of surrender and agreed to transition to our residential programs in Aurora. This is real evidence of the Lord's hand in what we do. Our goal, whether in Elgin or Aurora, is to see lives transformed through the power of the resurrected Christ. This is why we exist and in doing so, to bring glory and honor to His name (Phil. 2:9-11).

Dave Krieger Director, Elgin Wayside Center



LIFE TRANSI

Praise The Lord For He Is Good, He Is The God Who Sees - Genesis 16:13

Opportunities that are given to kids in Urban Youth Ministry programs are provided by the God who sees their needs. Diego arrived at Urban Youth Ministry's after-school program in 2015. He was a Brady elementary 3rd-grade student and an only child of a single mom. Diego was a very quiet boy even though he attended our program with four of his cousins. Diego did not only participate in UYM's after-school program; He also attended summer camp and winter camp through his sophomore year in high school. During this time, he received numerous opportunities through UYM.

The first was his involvement in The Fox Valley Orchestra El Sistema youth program. Diego received a free violin and free lessons in 4th grade where he learned his love for music. Today as a junior, Diego plays the saxophone in the East Aurora High School band. Numerous times He received free winter coats and birthday boxes and gifts from organizations like Northern Illinois Gas company, The Birthday Giving Program, and Boxes of Balloons. In 2018, Diego was part of a CNN special news story featuring The Birthday Giving Program.

Diego attended several musicals provided by the Paramount Theatre. The Fox Valley Park District Foundation sponsored free swimming lessons, where he learned to swim! He has volunteered at Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry, Jennings Terrace, Ed Huss Farm and helped at UYM's Walk-A-Mile and "A Night of Hope" fundraising events.

In 2019, Diego went on a Boundary Waters trip in upper Minnesota with the Harvest New Beginning Church Youth group, where he learned to live outside and travel in a canoe with no modern world amenities. The goal was to grow closer to God and to understand the importance of teamwork.

Through UYM Diego received information on The Young Eagles Flight program, and today, he is planning to attend college to become a pilot. The reality for Diego is that any pilot school would require good grades and would be very expensive. Diego has participated in UYM after-school tutoring and mentoring programs for 8 years and has maintained an A average every year. As far as tuition for college...he joined Hammerman a local Hammer Throw program after he tried it out during UYM summer camp in 2019. He is now in his fourth year of competition and is being pursued by several colleges offering scholarships in track and field, one being Lewis University where they have a wonderful pilot program.

The most important opportunity Diego received during UYM programs happened during summer camp in 2017 when he accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior! The God who sees gets all the glory for the opportunities UYM kids receive while attending UYM programs.

FORMATION



Urban Youth Ministry praised and thanked the Lord this summer and beyond for providing opportunities as only He can!

This year our UYM middle and high school students were invited to attend Family & Youth Bible Camp in Cedar Lake, Indiana. Aware of the needs of UYM kids, the FYBC decided to award UYM with 10 scholarships, each with a value of \$340.00 for 4 nights and 5 days of camp from July 24 to July 28, 2022. In addition to the 10 scholarships, our amazing donors that attended our April UYM banquet covered 4 more spots. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever (Psalms 106:1).

PRAISE THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD!

With only 14 paid camp tuitions to give out and almost 20 students wanting to attend, the students were challenged to meet certain criteria to qualify to attend camp. The students accumulated points while attending UYM day camp during the months of June and July for attendance, academics, volunteering, and good behavior. However, we had only 14 tuitions to give out. We reached out again to our UYM donors, and once again they met our needs and provided for the 4 tuitions. **PRAISE THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD!**

Our UYM students were on their way to a week they would not soon forget. There were so many "firsts" for our students. They stayed in dorms that were chaperoned by college students. They attended activities like rock climbing, canoeing, swimming in a lake, sitting by a campfire, participating in a talent show, and playing "messy" games. The most impactful time for them was the time they spent growing closer to Jesus. They attended 2 hours of Bible time in the morning and then 1 hour each evening, learning about Sampson and Delilah, as well as worshiping the Lord through music. The Bible teachers at FYBC shared the Gospel clearly with UYM students, which was evident in their behavior, choice of music, and conversations during and after attending camp.

PRAISE THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD!

"There's joy in the house of the Lord today and we won't be quiet. We shout out Your praise!" – Trinity, Jamaya, Kendra, Kenosha (middle school girls from Waldo Middle School, singing Phil Wickham's song, House of the Lord)

PRAISE THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD

Robin Sterkel Urban Youth Ministry Program Manager



Work the program, and trust God

Chris came into Wayside's Master's Touch program from Dixon Prison. While he was at Dixon, he was fortunate to be trained in computer programming. Before being arrested he was headed toward death, but he says, "God consistently blessed and watched over me during my time at Dixon."

At Wayside, Chris met Steve, whom I was mentoring at the time. My friend Steve was forming a business, Hope Analytics, and was looking to hire a support person. Chris and Steve met, and the computer language Chris was trained in at Dixon was exactly what Hope Analytics needed.

Going through the Master's Touch program helped to ground Chris in his relationship with God. After graduating (July 22) Chris began working for Hope Analytics. "Without a college degree and no real-world experience in the field of data engineering and software programming, God provided this job for me. God once again, like he'd done many times before, proved me and my outlook on life completely wrong." Chris



realized how real Proverbs 3:5-6 is, that we need to trust God in everything.

It has been fun the last year and a half to work with Chris and see him blossom in this new job after graduating from MT. Chris is a faithful servant here at Wayside. He helps many residents and staff with the wisdom and resources God has given him. "Most days I feel utterly and completely unworthy of these blessings. I realize God gave me these gifts for a reason and it's beyond all my understanding."

God is faithful and true. Since Chris' arrival, two other men have also come in from Dixon to Master's Touch. Chris has met with them and shared how God is faithful. "Work the program, and trust God has a plan for your life as He's shown me," he shares with them.

Today Chris loves his job, is engaged with his church, and gives back to Wayside as he can. Chris has experienced life transformation here at Wayside!!

Steve Madawick Sr. Chaplain, New Life Corrections

Embracing the Future

I first met Craig Schuler in the fall of 2014. He had come to Wayside to help with a painting project, one of which was my own office. So while the first application of paint was drying and he was waiting to apply the second coat, Craig and I had a chance to sit and chat.

I knew that he was a former resident in our program, and I wanted to know more about his story and what brought him here.

Craig went on to explain that alcohol was the driving reason for his first stay at Wayside. He went on to talk of his upbringing, the poor friendships that he'd formed, along with the consequences that followed. I remember him saying, "I've been through a lot of dangerous situations in my life. I'm tough and nothing scares me." His next words were the most telling. "The one thing that scares me is alcohol." Fast forward a couple of years later, when Craig entered our program again. His addiction again had a grip and was a formidable foe. As with many others who have relapsed and turn again to Wayside for help, I told him, "I am sorry to see you back, but I am so glad to see you back." Craig was staying in the fight for his sobriety.

Fast forward again to 2022, where we find Craig running his very own busy, successful painting company. Whenever I talk with him or see him, I always ask, "What's the number?" He then tells me the number of days. By the time you read this, our friend Craig is now over 2,190 days sober!

Having a front-row seat to witnessing transformation in people's lives is one of the great privileges that the Lord has given our staff. As a Wayside supporter, you are a part of Craig's story!

Steve Wise General Manager – Hope Outreach



The Heritage Society – Wayside's Most Loyal Supporters

Wayside Cross Ministries Heritage Society was created to recognize and honor loyal, long-term donors, this wonderful group has grown to 799 members. Their generosity (a little over 6,500 donations) makes transformation a reality at Wayside.

Many Heritage donors are regular monthly contributors. They provide a steady flow of dollars each month, this is a significant blessing in slower months since many donations come in near the end of the year.

Thanks to the member's sacrificial and generous support, Wayside continues to grow and serve the powerless and afflicted.

The criteria for membership includes benefactors who have faithfully and generously made financial contributions to the ministry over the past 15 years with gifts totaling \$3,500 or more.

A Gladys Abens

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