



A place of help, hope & healing in Philadelphia!

reflections for the Christmas Season

"Every good and perfect gift is from above,
coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights,
who does not change like shifting shadows."
(James 1:17 NIV)

December 2022

Dear Friends,

Refuge is a movement of people living out a belief in God's promise to the world in Christ.

We carry with us each day a simple truth—that despite the undeniable fallenness that surrounds us at times, we believe that a good and true living hope is at work—around us, and even inside us and between us.

The light that we have seen grow in the lives of the many, many people who have come to us for help is unmistakable—even when our healing seems beyond repair and small though it may be sometimes. And in the life of the ministry itself—we draw a similar encouragement in the many victories of all sizes that we have seen over many seasons.

Scripture tells us that "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." (James 1:17 NIV)



For the dedicated professionals and volunteers who have poured themselves out into the growth of our counseling work over the years, we regard Refuge as something sacred—a genuine, whole-hearted prayer lifted up in a spirit of thankfulness for the power of God's grace in this world.

As our confidence has grown from year to year, we celebrate so much in 2022:

- **we grew our counseling roster by +33%** to answer the growing demand for our services
- we broadly enhanced training opportunities for our clinical and administrative staff

- **we received more requests for services, served +30% more families, and offered +25% more appointments than at any time in our history**—with more requests coming in every single day
- to keep costs down, we pursued automation for every repetitive task we could
- **two of our counselors achieved state licensure:** [Amber Hernandez, LPC](#) and [Yin Hu, LPC](#)
- and what a pure pleasure it is to report that our graduate training program was finally brought back online in February 2022 and is **now flourishing at capacity** once again after being forced to pause in 2020/21 for the many complex problems that came with the pandemic

Without your support, what first steps could we have ever taken in this incredible journey? Now that we know the trial by fire that was waiting for us back when we first opened our doors in this community, what is clear is that every contribution big and small was truly indispensable along the way.

As it is with us, the story of each gift is deep and personal. For all your help along the way, you have our sincere thanks.

You have given us such a confidence to look forward in hope again to the year ahead.

May the sublime peace of Christ's glory find you and meet you where you are. Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!!

Every blessing to you and yours,

friends and family.
The Place of Refuge

support for the The Place of Refuge

the road ahead | 2023

By the grace you have shown us, Refuge now approaches having served nearly 1% of the population of eastern North Philadelphia (if even just counting each case as one, something we know to be well short of the true story of the impact of this place)—(!) small as we are and as lean as we've run these last 12+ years.

For all the growth that we've been blessed to see, we have narrowed our monthly operating shortfall greatly to just 10% shy of our break-even goal.

With a remaining \$26,000 still left (approximately \$2,200 per month), our efforts to close this gap through the continued expansion of our counseling outreach will continue again into 2023. With our wait list where it stands today and some capacity remaining in our current roster, by God's grace, it looks possible that this might just be what the Lord has for us in the weeks to come.

While this progress is a great encouragement, we know the work before us is far greater than this momentary milestone. Clearly, to keep pace with demand for these vital services, we must continue our efforts to recruit more providers to help us.

Please continue to keep us in prayer. As our counseling work grows, so too does the hurt that we see each day as we walk alongside those He sends to us for care.

We invite you to consider a year-ending gift to support our ongoing work and outreaches. Your willing heart is every blessing and encouragement to us as we step out into each new day.

Our hope is that you will see as we do the importance of the unique service that Refuge offers as the only faith-based, adult, outpatient counseling in the Philadelphia region to accept Medical Assistance insurance (the primary way that people in poverty in this country get help).

Donate Now

With the advent season for much of the world winding down and with Three Kings Day, Epiphany, and the Orthodox Christmas just days from now, we say Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to one and all!!

Thank you for your grace!! And may you find his good and true blessing everywhere you look in the year ahead!! Many thanks and God bless you!

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The Place of Refuge is a 501(c)3 non-partisan, non-profit organization that seeks to bring redemptive healing through faith-based trauma treatment and training focusing on urban populations and their caregivers.

We consider it a gift to be able to carry out this work. Thank you!

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