



A place of help, hope & healing in Philadelphia!

Setting our Gaze on Hope for the Year Ahead

*"In their hearts humans plan their course,
but the Lord establishes their steps."
(Proverbs 16:9)*

December 2024

Dear Friends,

The heart of someone who comes to us for help, who can measure it—her best smile underneath her winter hat, the composure she shows when she asks about our services, her attention split between her young children as they start to roam and explore our waiting area for the first time, bumping and pulling at her coat as she talks. And when she looks away, you see her hands shaking and the bruises as clear as a winter day—who can measure her heart?

With each person who comes to Refuge, it is important to see how much of themselves they set aside: their household chores, transportation money, grocery shopping, personal time to be social with friends and family, time to relax, and rest, all this and more to ask for help—there are incalculable tiny steps that had to be taken.

It is in how they carry their burdens that you can see their distress—shame, fear, confusion, perplexity, anger for pervasive injustices, anguish for losses, for endings, uncertainties—all with a shared want for resolutions, peace, hope, love, and for their heart's longing.

To see their willingness to hope is to know courage. To recognize the strength of character that each person shows us in arriving any given day is what starts to give shape to a sacred mutual alliance. If allowed time to grow and mature, the help we offer to share the weight of these burdens also grows and matures, and it gives way to a greater strength—for at Refuge, we know our strength is not our own.

Often, we face what may be great differences in age, culture, experiences, accents, and mannerisms—the challenges seem endless sometimes, but who is truly equipped to bless someone else? In John 14:16 we learn of a help that beckons us to ask for wisdom if we lack it. For our counselors, it is the same. Though it cannot be seen or known in this world, as we grow, in time we learn to trust outside ourselves and bring our hopes and burdens before the Lord's promise—the Spirit of our Redeemer. He not only orders our steps and assists us in all our demands and pressures—both high and mundane, but his promise is fulfilled as He heals the broken-hearted and sets captives free in a spirit of true humility. The mark He leaves on our lives is known only by our peace, a peace that defies understanding—our inward tenderness, kindness, mercy, and grace.

It is all His work, purpose, life, and light. He is the one with the power to raise us to his mercy seat where his anointing Spirit touches our lives, and we are set free to live the life He gives us in Himself.



At Refuge, we celebrate this season now coming to a close. Although the last leg of this journey has been hard, and it seems that every day the pain in this world grows all around us, even so we look forward with hope for the year to come—for truly by God's grace, He is with us.

- with **76 individuals and families receiving services today and still more capacity to grow**, we are seeing more people than ever
- the **3 new counselors who joined us this year** are growing and maturing in their roles
- with major updates to our intake systems now complete, we are offering appointments to people making new requests sooner than at any time in our history
- recruiting to bring on more new counselors to join us in this important work over the coming year has already begun—**prayerfully, to help us meet our goal to grow our current services over the next year from 115 individuals per year to a new capacity to 225 clients per year**, and
- with each of the our 5 Master-level counselors preparing to submit their applications for state licensing to become Licensed Associate Professional Counselors (LAPCs) in January, we are looking ahead with great anticipation to **new opportunities to expand our services to accept more insurance coverages**, which look to be coming soon

Please continue to pray for our patience and energy as we continue to grow this precious ministry to serve more and more of the many, many hurting people in our region.

Not one of us who comes to Refuge has come to this place without having known great pain. We know this is true for many of you too, our precious friends and family who have answered the call support us on our way in this journey. The help that we each offer here is a sign of the sacred hope we share—in better things to come. On behalf of the board, the staff, and for each life this work has touched, you have our thanks.

May the peace of Christ's glory, which surpasses all understanding meet you where you are and go ahead of you in all things. Wishing you all the richness of love and gladness to surround your tables this Christmas Season and through the new year—bless your heart!

friends and family.
The Place of Refuge

a challenge match of \$10,000 to kick off the new year (!!)
give us a running start on the road ahead | 2025

Today, as we prayerfully look ahead at the many goals for the year to come, we know there will be challenges, and we know that we will need your help to make this happen!

In the lead up to the end of this year, as we talked over each of the powerful projects that look to be in store for us in 2025 with our board and with our closest contributors, one of our most loving supporters encouraged us to share a great encouragement to help us get a running start: a **\$10,000 matching challenge** to help us kick off the new year. All our efforts to multiply this precious work, making it more available to more families in our region would receive such an enormous boost if you can help us meet this goal.

We have generously been given **until the end of January** to see if we can make this match! Please consider making a gift or pledge today!!

Call us at our office at 267-909-8550, ext. 2. We would be so happy to help you make a pledge over the phone. Or even if just to say hello and check in, we would love to hear from you!! Or to make a gift today, you may or use the link in the button below or visit: www.placeofrefuge.net/give for more options.

Donate Now

With all our heart, thank you!! May God's great blessing grant you peace and confidence in every good work you undertake this year! Happy New Year!!

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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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