Lighthouse MINISTRIES

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

Cultivate

Lighthouse Ministries strives to support families by walking alongside youth in our Southeast Canton community. We offer safe, holistic, and effective opportunities to assist students in understanding their God-given giftedness and potential for impacting the world around them.

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A letter from our EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the past year, we celebrate the growth and development we see in the children coming to the Lighthouse. Growth and development do not occur automatically and without investment. It's a process that takes time. At the Lighthouse, we embrace a strengths-based approach that not only nurtures the potential within each child but also empowers them to cultivate their own path towards a bright and promising future.

Cultivation, in its essence, begins with the external environment we create for children coming to the Lighthouse. It is about carefully tending to every aspect of their surroundings – providing them with safe spaces, enriching experiences, and nurturing relationships. All of which serve as fertile ground for growth. From the classrooms where knowledge blooms to the playgrounds where friendships blossom, every interaction and opportunity is meticulously designed to cultivate a child's curiosity, resilience, and sense of belonging.

Beyond shaping external environments, we celebrate the unique ability of each child to cultivate their own passions and skills from within. We recognize that every child is born with innate strengths and interests waiting to be discovered and developed. Whether it's through art, science, athletics, or music, we encourage our young learners to explore their interests fearlessly, knowing that these pursuits are not just hobbies but pathways to self-discovery and mastery.

This past year has been a testament to the power of cultivation in action. We have witnessed children transform as they delve into subjects that ignite their curiosity, taking ownership of their learning journeys with enthusiasm and determination. Through our programs and initiatives, we have seen shy voices blossom into confident leaders, hesitant steps evolve into bold strides towards skill development and personal growth.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to fostering an environment where cultivation thrives at every turn. We envision a future where every child has the opportunity to cultivate their talents, dreams, and aspirations–to become not only the best version of themselves but also active contributors to their communities and the world at large.

Thanks for taking the time to learn more about the Lighthouse. Your generosity and dedication make it possible for us to continue providing transformative experiences that shape the lives of the children living in southeast Canton. Together, we cultivate hope, possibility, and a brighter future.

Peace,
Darin Nissley, Executive Director

LIGHTHOUSE STAFF

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CHILD CARE ADMINISTRATOR

SEIRRA CROCK
OFFICE MANAGER

DAN HOOLEY
BOOKKEEPER

OLIVIA HUNTER
COMMUNICATIONS INTERN

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PROGRAM STAFF & MAINTENANCE

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DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

DARIN NISSLEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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GRAPHIC DESIGN

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DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BETH SLABAUGH
MEMBER AT LARGE
DENTAL HYGIENIST, BACHELOR OF ARTS IN T.E.S.O.L.

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MEMBER AT LARGE
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE CITY OF CANTON

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BOARD TREASURER
VICE PRESIDENT, KIDRON ELECTRIC, INC

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MEMBER AT LARGE
REP FROM FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

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BOARD SECRETARY
CEO, CANTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SCOTT SCHNYDERS
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CEO, REFUGE OF HOPE

TIFFANY BROWN
MEMBER AT LARGE
DIRECTOR, CASA OF STARK & CARROLL COUNTIES

TYARA WEBB
MEMBER AT LARGE
ELIGIBILITY/REFERRAL SPECIALIST, STARK COUNTY DEPT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES

Lighthouse
MINISTRIES

Providing pathways for the students in our community to move beyond the obstacles standing in their way in their development as learners, community members, providers, and followers of Jesus.

Mission + Vision

To support families by walking alongside the youth of our Southeast Canton community by offering safe, holistic, and effective opportunities for students to understand their God-given gifts and their potential to impact the world around them.

Our Dream

That every student living in the Southeast has the opportunity to be supported in the pursuit of vocational, social, spiritual, and financial stability.

Core Values

DIGNITY

Every person deserves to be understood, viewed, and interacted with as a gift from God, intended to be a blessing to those in their sphere of influence. Everyone is able. Everyone is creative.

DISCIPLESHIP

All of our actions as an organization are undertaken with the intent to point all Lighthouse stakeholders to Jesus.

FIDELITY

We will work with passion, commitment, and resolve in the fulfillment of our Mission and Vision.

PROXIMITY

Our primary responsibility is to the Southeast when it comes to how we invest our resources and who is able to take advantage of our programming.

SELF EFFICACY

Everyone has the right to pursue their vocational dreams; the opportunities to learn, to grow, and to address the obstacles barring their pursuits.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

33
STUDENTS

20
ENRICHMENT CLASSES

282
HOURS OF PROGRAMMING

Each day after school, the Lighthouse provides a nurturing environment for 1st through 6th-grade students in our neighborhood, offering opportunities for free play, nutritious snacks, academic tutoring, emotional support, and diverse enrichment activities. These activities are more than just extracurricular; they are pathways for students to explore and develop their innate talents and passions. By exposing them to activities such as pottery, entrepreneurship, and drama—uncommon in our community—we empower our students to cultivate their own interests and skills, fostering resilience and self-confidence along the way. At the Lighthouse, we celebrate the growth that comes from embracing new experiences, viewing each opportunity as a pivotal moment in a child's journey toward discovering and realizing their full potential.

ASP Enrichment Opportunities

- ART
- ZUMBA
- DRAMA
- MINDFULNESS
- GAMES
- FOOD DECOR
- BUSINESS BUILDERS
- CONSTRUCTION
- POTTERY

3:00 PM Opening

After School kicks off with free play in our Multipurpose building and outdoor activities on the basketball court. This is a nice way to transition from the school day into the After School Program! Following play, students enjoy a snack and join in the Lighthouse pledge, a reminder of their innate value as an image bearer of God.

4:20 PM Academics

The academic portion of After School further supports the learning that happens in the classroom. The Lighthouse space is a nurturing environment to receive homework help, work on an electronic device and connect with staff. This portion of After School gives students additional assistance to achieve their academic goals.

5:05 PM Enrichment

The Enrichment component introduces students to new activities, which cultivates their imagination and discovery. Some classes include pottery, cake decorating, mindfulness, art therapy, drama, electronics, zumba, stomp, entrepreneurship and many more. Enrichment is a way to celebrate, and grow, creativity and curiosity!

In the state of Ohio, programs outside school hours are required to be licensed through the Department of Jobs & Family Services. In 2020, the Lighthouse became licensed and in 2022, we applied for and earned a 5-star rating for childcare facilities!

SUMMER ENRICHMENT CAMP

34
STUDENTS

150
HOURS OF PROGRAMMING

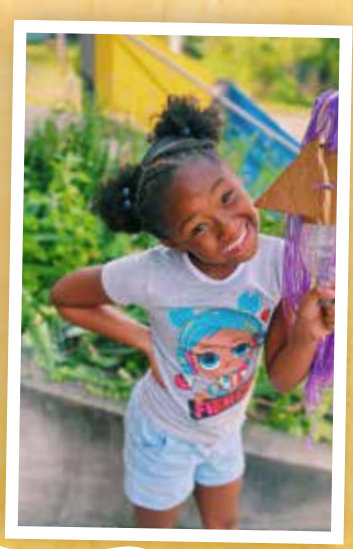
29
STUDENTS TO CAMP LUZ

Everything blooms in summer!

At the Lighthouse's Summer Enrichment Camp, we provide diverse experiences that allow students to discover and develop their own passions and skills, hopefully opening doors to envision future possibilities. Our innovative "school with no desks" approach not only prevents summer learning loss but also fosters a love for learning through educational and interactive outdoor adventures spanning seven weeks.

Staffed by local university students, our camp encourages exploration in reading, math, arts, science, gardening, music, and stories from the Bible, empowering students to engage deeply in areas that spark their curiosity. Weekly FUN days amplify the excitement with field trips to local attractions, enriching their educational journey with real-world experiences.

Additionally, our campers automatically join Camp Luz, a week-long Christian overnight camp where they cultivate interpersonal skills and explore spiritual growth through activities such as canoeing, bible study, and group discussions. At the Lighthouse, we are dedicated to cultivating a summer where each student discovers their unique talents and interests, preparing them for a future filled with limitless possibilities.



Fannie May
Fannie May
Fannie May

POPLAR

FIELD TRIPS

13
FIELD TRIPS

461
MILES TRAVELED

32
STUDENTS

The Summer Activities Project cultivates the imagination of students in grades 1-12 by providing enriching experiences that expose them to new interests and possibilities. Through engaging field trips across Stark County every Tuesday and Friday throughout the summer, students embark on fun-filled adventures that ignite their curiosity and inspire them to dream big. These outings are carefully designed to expand their horizons, nurturing a sense of wonder and exploration as they discover new places and experiences beyond their everyday surroundings.

SAP FIELD TRIPS INCLUDE:
(SUMMER 2024)

Swimming
Akron Zoo
Atwood Lake
Steffen Dairy Farm
Neighborhood Service Project
Dundee Falls
Uhrichsville Water Park
Movies
Stirrup Courage
Beech Creek Botanical Gardens

YOUTH MINISTRY CLUBS

We believe that exploring faith and God's love is most fully experienced together, in community.

Our Youth Ministry Clubs are held every Tuesday, for middle and high school students living in Southeast Canton.

These gatherings provide a safe and welcoming space for students to discuss, ask questions and explore their part in God's story. A feeling of belonging is woven into every aspect of the night: from sharing a meal together, to enjoying interactive games to engaging in a Bible lesson.

It is our hope that our Tuesday evenings cultivate a lifelong desire in our students to explore who God is and who God made them to be.

SCHOLARSHIPS

17
STUDENTS ENROLLED

$873
FUNDS DISTRIBUTED

$10,600
SCHOLARSHIPS EARNED

When students discover their strengths, they are empowered to cultivate their own path towards a bright and promising future. Our Vocation Scholarship Fund helps lighten the financial burden to pursue a career path. Each year, every Middle School and High School student enrolled at the Lighthouse is able to build their personal scholarship fund by regularly attending Lighthouse programming at a rate of 60% or higher. Their GPA is then multiplied by $20 each semester in Middle School and by $40 in High School. As we continue to grow the scholarship fund, our desire is to see that each student is able to build scholarships of at least $2,000 by the time they graduate.

As our students pursue their vocational dreams, the Lighthouse is here to celebrate them every step of the way. Rooted in their strengths and interests, we pray they feel equipped to make a meaningful impact in their community and the world.

SCHOLARSHIPS ARE GENERATED BY:

MIDDLE SCHOOL
GPA x $40/year ($80 for 2023-24*)
$480 max over 3 years

HIGH SCHOOL
GPA x $80/year ($160 for 2023-24*)
$1,280 max over 4 years

***Thanks to the generosity of our donors, all scholarship dollars earned this year were doubled!**

CULTIVATE

36 STUDENTS

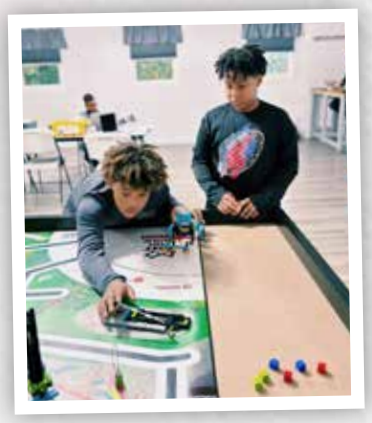
54 CLASSES

Cultivate classes are pathways for students to explore new interests that tap into their curiosity, creativity and problem solving skills. Thanks to some really wonderful partnerships, these programs are available to any young learner in our community!

Exploring new crafts, whether science based, music centered or art focused, has immediate impact and long term benefits, too. Students build confidence and can unlock new ways of thinking. And over time, this cultivates a desire to be a forever learner. We currently offer strings, robotics, dance team and pottery! We hope to add even more programs in the future.

SATURDAY STRINGS

In partnership with the Canton Symphony Orchestra, Saturday Strings is an exciting way for students to dive into the world of orchestral music. Our young musicians receive 1 hour lessons in violin, viola and cello. Instruments are provided, and students can practice what they've learned at home. Lessons are led by the talented musicians from the Canton Symphony Orchestra, with the exception of monthly ensembles. Our students experience deep joy from this program and it is a beautiful and accessible way to experience classical music!



ROBOTICS

Robotics Club is a partnership with One Byte at a Time, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping individuals discover passion and purpose through technology. Lighthouse students can participate in this program to explore the world of robotics. Students work in teams to develop robots that work on a mission board: an obstacle course where teams gain points when their robots accomplish specific tasks. Robotics Club is a wonderful introduction to the world of technology and design, which holds many opportunities! In addition, the focus on teamwork and problem solving skills translate well into both classroom learning and career pursuits.

POTTERY

Pottery was first introduced as an enrichment component in our After School Program. Our students loved the program so much that we now offer a deeper dive through Cultivate! Students come to our art studio, Studio 3, for sessions on Saturday mornings. The sessions are led by a member of the Canton Potters Guild. Students engage in every step of the pottery making process, and many enjoy gifting their finished pieces to family and friends.

DANCE

The Dance and Step Team was another enrichment piece that bloomed into a Cultivate class! The sessions are offered every other Saturday and are led by a duo that teach choreography and drum basics. Movement and rhythm are powerful means of expression, and we are eager to see how this program progresses!

CITY SOJOURN

SERVE | LEARN | RELATE | RENEW

City Sojourn is our service learning opportunity at the Lighthouse. Individuals and groups can spend a day, week or a whole summer immersed in learning more about the Canton community and the Lighthouse. Participants help out with projects at the Lighthouse and other local non-profits, while learning the history of hardships that have impacted this community. Hands-on experiences and simulations allow participants to gain different perspectives and discover their role in God's kingdom work.

SERVE

Teams devote time to help with projects at the Lighthouse and local organizations. This opportunity gives groups a closer look at the triumphs and challenges facing the community, and the local organizations that are meeting tangible needs.

LEARN

Groups expand on the service component through hands-on learning. Bible lessons, poverty simulations and conversations about the broader narrative of Canton provide helpful context about how we can love and serve others.

RELATE

Connecting with others, who may have different worldviews or experiences, provides a deeper appreciation for the beauty and diversity of God's creation.

RENEW

Opportunities to serve, learn and relate are transformational! Through their service learning experience, we hope participants leave with a growing desire to hear and honor other worldviews and to celebrate Christ's light in others.

Service Learning

ONE DAY

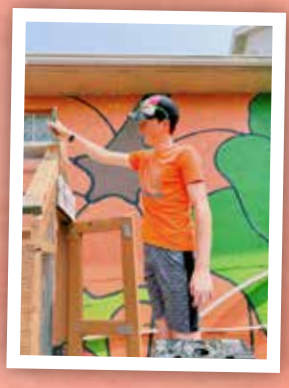
Come spend a day volunteering at the Lighthouse! Thanks to volunteer groups of all sizes, work projects and care of our facility is made possible year-round. Work days are set aside for local groups who have established or are looking to establish a long-term relationship with the Lighthouse and our community. One day service projects focus on facility renovations, general maintenance, and community beautfication projects.

ONE WEEK

Groups that are looking for week-long service learning experiences will find a unique and transformational opportunity here at the Lighthouse. Weeks spent with City Sojourn are divided between learning, serving, and relating. This combination of education and experience make for not only a powerful time in Canton, but it is also instrumental in shaping and growing a passion for serving in a Christ-like way, as well as dreaming about how He wants to use us as His hands and feet.

ONE SUMMER

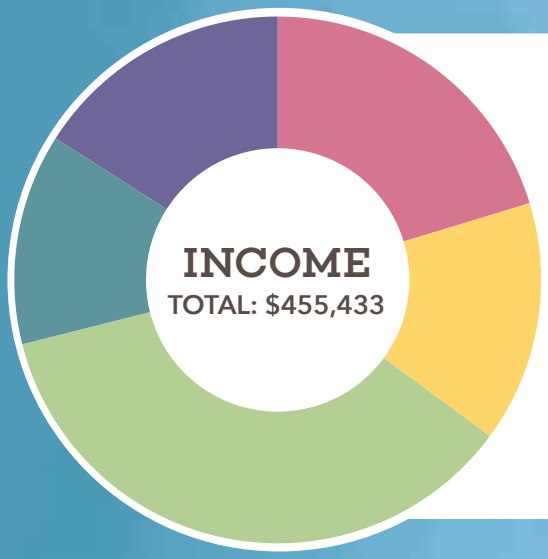
Summer-long service opportunities are for high school and college-age students with a heart for God, a heart for justice, and a heart for the city. These opportunities include being staff, mentors, or enrichment instructors within our Summer Enrichment Camp, making a Kingdom impact in our neighborhood. We believe spending these summer months empowering our Lighthouse students to dream also empowers our staff, mentors, and instructors to dream in their own development and growth.



FINANCE REPORT

A look at the numbers

The numbers below reflect our fiscal year from June 1, 2023 through May 31, 2024.



36%	INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS	$164,243
20%	BUSINESS CONTRIBUTIONS	$92,656
16%	PROGRAM GENERATED INCOME	$70,403
15%	CONGREGATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS	$67,573
13%	GRANTS	$60,558

27%	AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM	$116,745
25%	SUMMER ENRICHMENT CAMP	$106,000
12%	DEVELOPMENT	$53,006
7%	CULTIVATE	$30,707
6%	SUMMER ACTIVITIES PROJECT	$23,630
6%	SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM	$27,206
6%	YOUTH MINISTRY CLUBS	$26,245
5%	FACILITIES	$20,282
3%	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	$12,259
3%	RESERVED FUNDS	$10,800

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:

- Pouring concrete driveway and activity area in front of studio
- Fire safety upgrades for our rental house
- Upgrades to the art studio

VOLUNTEER HOURS

2,969 HOURS VALUED AT $53,433

(We value volunteer hours at $18/hr.)

OUR 2023-2024 PARTNERS

Partner support that drives our mission

AIM Academy @ Belden
Albermarle Foundation
Anabaptist Community Development Network
Beacon Academy
Beech Mennonite Church
Berlin Mennonite Church
Camp Luz
Canton City School District
Canton Symphony Orchestra
Cassel Bear
Central Christian School
Children's Hunger Alliance
Christ Foundation
City of Canton
Countryside Plumbing
Cornerstone Vision & Development Center
Crown Hill Mennonite Church
Data Dames Marketing
Dayspring Christian Fellowship
Deli Ohio
Dutcher Door
Early Childhood Resource Center
Environmental Flooring
Everence Financial
Faith Family Church
First Friends Church of Canton
First Mennonite Church of Canton
Four Oaks Properties
Habitat for Humanity
Hall Kistler & Co LLP
Home Appliance Company
HRM Enterprises, Inc
Hudicort Raber Charitable Fund
Kidron Electric, Inc.
Kingsway Christian School
Malone University
Maple Grove Mennonite Church
Martins Creek Mennonite Church
MCC Connections
Mennonite Central Committee
Mennonite Mutual Insurance
North Olmstead Friends Church
Oak Grove Mennonite Church
One Byte At A Time
OSU Extension Office
Patrick Elementary School
Plain Local Summer Feeding Program
Pleasant Wealth
Project REBUILD
R. Miller Concrete LLC
Refuge of Hope
Rembrandt Homes
Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church
Sisters of Charity Foundation
Sonnenberg Mennonite Church
Sonnenberg Mennonite Women
Stark County District Library
Stark County Prosecutor's Office
Stark Metropolitan Housing Authority
STEAMM Academy of Hartford
Together NEO
TomTod Ideas
Tilmor
United Way of Greater Stark County
Walkie Talkie Espresso & Coffee
Walsh University
Windy Pines LLC
Yoder Floor Design LLC
Yoder-Bontrager Insurance Co.
YMCA

FINANCIAL SERVICES SUPPLIES & MATERIALS PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

Lighthouse
MINISTRIES

CANTONLIGHTHOUSE.ORG

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