

2022 HeavenEarth Church Impact Report

We exist to make a lasting impact in our community.



“You are the light of the world. A city on top of a hill can’t be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on top of a lampstand, and it shines on all who are in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven.”

Matthew 5:14-16 (CEB)

Let's celebrate the fruit of our mission and values.

It was a *great* year for HeavenEarth Church, which means it was a great year for YOU, because you are the church. We are the church together. As you may know, our mission is to make a lasting impact in our community by building relationships with all kinds of neighbors, helping them to experience freedom from their burdens and helping them to know Jesus and practice his way.

We value:

- meeting people where they are and seeing them as masterpieces;
- practicing what Jesus says and does;
- fixing our eyes on Jesus and living by his Spirit;
- blessing our community through friendships and partnerships;
- and being grateful and responsible with what we're given.

Let's celebrate what God has done through us to fulfill our mission in alignment with our values.

Building Relationships with All Kinds of Neighbors

At our first-ever Harvest Gathering in October we got the amazing opportunity to celebrate this diversity of relationships we've built since 2018. What's so great about the picture below is that it captures all our values at once.



In this picture are people we met in 2018 when Ross started serving with Bridges Alliance of Johnson County. There are people we met through delivering meal supplements to families in the Clark Pleasant school district in 2020. We also had people at the Harvest Gathering who are people we'd just met. There were young and old, people with different income levels, people with different levels of faith, people new to our church and people old to our church.

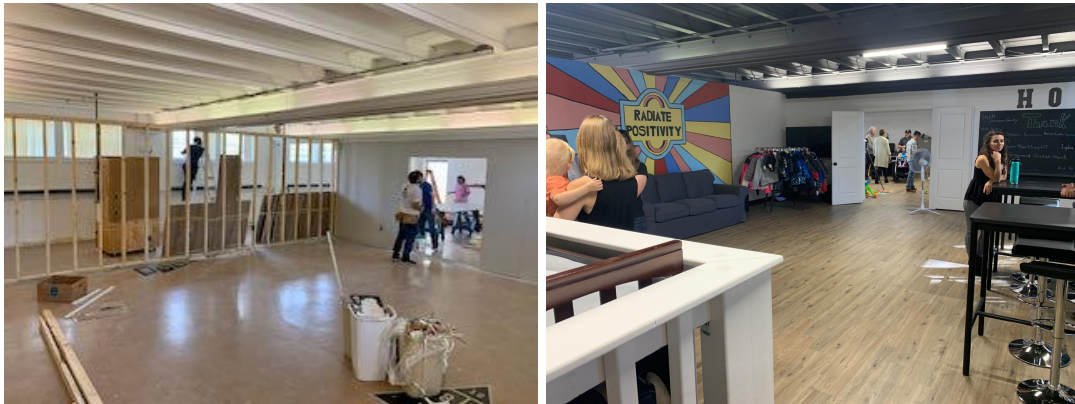
Here are some other things we did this year to meet people where they are and build relationships

- We started a podcast, *The Broken Bread Podcast*, in partnership with Grace UMC to explore the stories of people in our community who have stepped out of organized religion.
- We started hosting gatherings at Johnson County Community Corrections in partnership with Grace UMC to get to know folks there.
- We had a vendor booth at Whiteland Community Day where Ashley met and spoke with lots of people in our community.
- One reason we value partnerships and friendships is because it allows us to build relationships with people we couldn't otherwise. We partnered with at least these organizations and people this year: Erin Davis and Love More (the mural above), Johnson County Community Foundation (paint for the mural), KIC-IT, Clark Pleasant Community School Corporation, Upstream Prevention, Empower Johnson County, Drug Free Johnson County, Grace United Methodist Church, Community Corrections, Kaelynn Maturin with Franklin Community H.S., and Resources of Hope.

Helping People Experience Freedom from Their Burdens

Probably the biggest development of our year is that HeavenEarth Spaces, Inc. (the 501c3 nonprofit HEC created that is dedicated to providing affordable space for nonprofits and individuals) became the official owner of the property at 309 E. Main Street.

HeavenEarth Spaces and *lots of volunteers* from our HeavenEarth Church family *got to work* helping Resources of Hope, a nonprofit organization that resources foster/kinship families, to renovate the lower level and move in. This helped Resources of Hope to continue and expand their greatly impactful work in the community. It also helped to transform an old, broken down church into a hub for community transformation.



Here are some other cool things we did to help people experience freedom from their burdens:

- We partnered with Kids In Crisis Intervention Team (KIC-IT) in several ways including helping facilitate Youth Action Nights. We also helped on a rainy day to distribute their Easter baskets to clients and families. We are also making a donation to KIC-IT out of our Local Impact Fund (5% of giving to Day-to-Day Operation that HEC gives back to local nonprofits).
- Each year, we also donate 10 percent of giving to our Day-to-Day Operations to the state and global initiatives of the United Methodist Church.
- After fall break, we purchased and delivered donuts and coffee to *every* school in Clark Pleasant Community School Corporation as well as the transportation building.
- Through our Neighbor Assistance Fund and through our members being the church in their ordinary lives, we have provided assistance and companionship to dozens of individuals and families in immediate crisis.
- We partnered with Upstream Prevention to host a Lunch and Learn event with local faith-based leaders to reduce stigma related to substance use disorders. As a part of this partnership, we also installed a NaloxBox on the side of our building.
- Ross continues to serve as a pastor to the community. Here are a few ways Ross serves: on Johnson County's Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council (JRAC), as White River Township Fire Department's chaplain, as a board member for Empower Johnson County as well as Drug Free Johnson County.
- Ross wrote letters of support for some of our friends navigating the criminal justice system, and Ross accompanied a couple of folks for their court dates.

Helping People Know Jesus and Practice His Way

Our leading values are about *fixing our eyes on Jesus and living by His Spirit*, as well as *learning through practice, not just talk*. At the end of the day, we believe that lasting transformation happens through Jesus. We want to invite people to follow him with us, to be shaped by his teachings, and to put his way into practice. Here are some things we did this year to do that.

- We refined our small groups so that they are simplified and aligned with the express purpose of *helping people to live like Jesus together*. Now and into the next year, these groups will be growing and stretching themselves with a rhythm of *being, doing, and learning* inspired by Jesus's Sermon on the Mount.
- Folks who are leaders of our groups have started living out a Leadership Covenant where they meet with Ross monthly for training in discipleship, and they commit to growing in a daily practice of spiritual disciplines.
- We formed a Strategy Team in the summer to help us bear the fruit of our mission more intentionally. This team has made a *big* goal to help 30 people take steps toward being *committed followers of Jesus by August 2023*. We want to help 30 people plug all the way in with Jesus—help them live as students of Jesus who learn to live like Jesus, who seek guidance to act from the Holy Spirit continually, who are transformed and then transform their community.
- As a byproduct of the work the Strategy Team has done, we've created a new discipleship pathway that can meet folks of different backgrounds where they are and invite them to a next step in their journey with Christ.
- Spiritual growth can be hard to measure, but one of the signs of growth is *giving*. For the second year in a row, we saw more people express their faith through giving, and we are incredibly grateful for this.
- Since the fall of this year, we are seeing a noticeable increase in the number of people joining us for Sunday gatherings in person and online. The spiritual quality of our Sunday gatherings has increased as well as the quantity of people engaged in them. Thanks be to God.

How Did We Do with Our 2022 Dreams?

Below are dreams we listed this time last year. Let's see how we did.

1. We would like to *grow our focus on impact with children*.

How'd we do? We made significant progress. We increased the quality of our

preparation for Kids Church on Sundays *big time* by having a detailed outline made for each week that corresponds with what adults are talking about in the Sunday conversation. Our Community Coordinator, Ashley, also created a nursery room at the church. We also added a couple of volunteers to our Kids Church roster—which included setting up background checks for folks to go through. We still have more progress we'd like to make with this.

2. We would like to see *more lives changed through our recovery efforts*.

How'd we do? As you can see above, we've done some big things through our community partnerships. We had an amazing teaching series at the beginning of the year called *Jesus and the 12 Steps* inspired by our friends in recovery. It was POWERFUL! We've had some struggles with our Wednesday night meeting that we call Recovery Church, but we've implemented some intentional changes that we think will make a big difference in the long run.

3. We want to *make the most of our partnerships in the community so generational impact happens*. We had a dynamite year in collaboration with our local partners. We want to see more of that in 2022.

How'd we do? Again, this is one of the strong points of our church. We are heavily involved with what's going on in our community, and it's making a difference!

4. To grow our capacity overall with our mission and values, *we are hiring another staff person in 2022*. This is one way we will realize the dreams God has given us.

How'd we do? God did great! And we just happened to be listening. We are so thankful we hired Ashley Walden Owens as our Community Coordinator.

5. We want to *be more intentional about helping people take the next step with Jesus*. To do this, we must dedicate resources to individuals, families, groups and our entire church family.

How'd we do? We did *a lot* with this, as you heard about above. But we want to keep pushing with this. We want to meet people where they are, help them find their place with Jesus, and help them go with him and grow with him.

6. We started a new 501c3 organization called *HeavenEarth Spaces, Inc.*, as an offshoot of the mission of HeavenEarth Church. Its mission is to create and cultivate space for the good of the community. HeavenEarth Spaces will take ownership of the 309 E Main Street property in 2022 and transform it into a

community center.

How'd we do? Success! As you can see from the pictures above, we successfully pulled this off, and we couldn't be happier with all that's possible because of it.

Thank YOU for Being the Church!

Thank you and thanks be to God. We've come so incredibly far since our humble beginnings in 2018-2019. We're excited for what God can do in us and through us in 2023! Will you come along?