

Community Engagement

March 9, 2019

Announcing: The Akron Resilience Project

Building Capacity and Partnerships to Change the World.



There is no doubt that the congregations in our Association are actively engaging in countless efforts to improve the everyday lives of the members of the communities we serve. Still, we dream that the world can be better than it is. Our society is experiencing many changes, and many of the resources that communities have relied on for support continue to dwindle, or they have dried up completely. There are many people who work daily to improve the wellbeing of our communities, often with little resources and little recognition. Our congregations, along with many interfaith groups, desire ways to work together to put our faith into action and bring real systemic, social change. One of the best ways to effect real change in our local communities is to build strong partnerships with people who share our commitments. That is why we are proud to announce **the Akron Resilience Project**.

The Akron Resilience Project is a bold, community empowerment initiative, consisting of numerous partnerships from across our region. Through this project, walking in the footsteps of Jesus, the Living Water Association will build our capacity for change by collectively utilizing the strengths of our congregations and forming partnerships with individual residents, local associations, and formal institutions.

Partners from a number of groups joined with **First Serve** from First Congregational Church in Hudson in September to make some initial improvements to Elizabeth Park.



Some of these partnerships are overtly religious in nature. Many, however, are rooted in active forms of spirituality that traditional religious groups mistake as "secular" or "non-religious." Our differences need not prevent us from forming partnerships that draw on our shared commitment to improve the wellbeing of the people in our communities. That is what the Akron Resilience Project is all about.

Since this past fall, the Living Water Association has received a number of grants. These grants have allowed us to partner with the Akron Community Foundation, the Akron Parks Collaborative, the City of Akron, and a host of other community groups. Through these partnerships, we will be able to put our faith into action and bring much needed resources and programming to the residents of an area of Akron known as Cascade Valley.

We invite you, your congregation, and your networks to prayerfully join us on this journey. Look for future updates and ways to plug in.

—Rev. Michael Anthony Howard, Minister of Faith in Action,
Living Water Association ONE



The children in Cascade Village participated in the design process.