

REJOICE! CHURCH RECEIVES SENIOR TRANSPORTATION AND YOUTH GRANTS FROM AKRON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION (ACF)

Rejoice! Lutheran Church in Hudson was notified by Akron Community Foundation (ACF) last month that it was awarded two grants as part of last Fall's On-the-Table discussion groups hosted by Rejoice!

Each year, over 300 individuals in Summit County self-organize to discuss key topics developed by ACF. This year's requested topics were 1) better serving the needs of seniors, 2) inclusion of those with disabilities or special needs in the community, and 3) prevention of addictions.

Based on the Rejoice! strategies, which include focusing on the needs of seniors and youth in our communities, a discussion group was attended by approximately 10 members from Rejoice Lutheran Church and Community of St. John, and Greg McNeil of Cover2 Resources.

Discussion about the needs of seniors included the need for companionship, transportation, and snow removal, with a \$2000 grant being received for transportation services. A pilot program for transportation (to medical appointments or grocery needs) for qualifying seniors in Hudson will be set up this fall/winter and modeled after the transportation programs in Solon and Twinsburg. Sedanorvantransportation.com will act as the service provider and will be reimbursed from Rejoice through the grant. More details will follow and seniors need not be a member of Rejoice Lutheran Church. Assuming a successful pilot, a proposal would be presented to the appropriate audience for a larger pilot or future funding.

Regarding the prevention of youth addiction to drugs or alcohol, discussions included peer support programs at the Hudson middle school and high school levels and various approaches to mindfulness training, art therapy and music therapy at the high school level. Cover2 Resources Inc. received a \$1000 grant for mental health awareness and substance abuse prevention programming in the City of Hudson and Rejoice received \$2000 to be administered with Hudson High School for mindfulness training and art and music therapies.