

# ANNUAL REPORT 2025

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BRIDGE of GRACE  
MINISTRIES

# A WORD FROM OUR FOUNDER

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Bridge of Grace Ministries was founded in 2012 in the Mount Vernon Park neighborhood located in southeast Fort Wayne, Indiana. It was a neighborhood full of potential just waiting for a nudge towards hope.

Fast forward to today, Bridge of Grace is more committed to the residents of MVP and southeast Fort Wayne than ever before.

In 2025, like the rest of our country, many of our neighbors experienced challenges and financial hardships due to circumstances beyond their control. The Bridge of Grace team, board of directors, volunteers, investors, and supporters rallied around Mount Vernon Park and ensured our neighborhood had the opportunity to create connections and received access to much needed resources.

I remain in awe of all that God has done in southeast Fort Wayne, and I invite you to explore the 2025 highlights throughout this report!

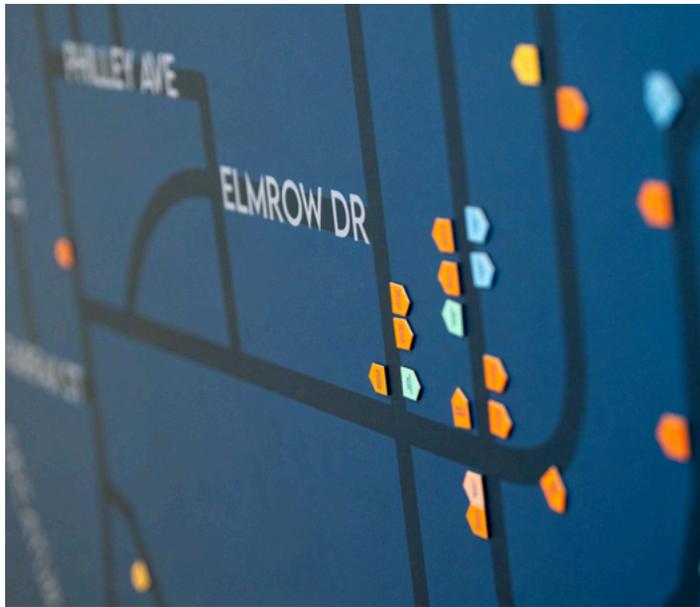
**javier mondragon**

CO-FOUNDER/CEO



# CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

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## WHO WE ARE

Bridge of Grace Ministries is a Christian community development organization created to transform lives based in southeast Fort Wayne, IN. Through our mission of empowering people to build on their God-given strengths and live life with purpose, we endeavor to break the cycle of poverty and build thriving and sustainable neighborhoods alongside engaged and indigenous community leaders.

We use Asset-Based Community Development methodology for the sustainable development of communities based on their strengths and potentials. This approach puts people at the center as we identify what is good in our community so that we can build on the assets instead of focusing on challenges and what is wrong in our community. We believe that everyone is created in the image of God with unique strengths and talents. We refuse to see our neighbors as simply our clients or people without anything to offer. Instead, we pray God works through Bridge of Grace to affirm the people in our community. Our role is to help our neighbors realize their value and power.

# OUR CALLING

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## MISSION

We empower people to build on their God-given strengths and live life with purpose.

## VISION

To break the cycle of poverty by building thriving and sustainable neighborhoods in southeast Fort Wayne.

## PURPOSE

To close the gaps of opportunity and create access to resources southeast Fort Wayne residents need and opportunities they deserve.

### LEARN MORE

[bgministries.org/who-we-are](https://bgministries.org/who-we-are)



# 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

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In effort to create affordable housing in southeast Fort Wayne, Bridge of Grace will construct eight new multifamily triplexes (totaling 24 units) in 2026. \$5.6 million was raised in 2025 through the generosity of grants and individual and foundation donations.

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In 2025, 542 volunteers served 6,398 hours, with a value of nearly \$200,000 in economic value of impact to Bridge of Grace and our community.

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Our board of directors welcomed five new board members: Jeff Ostermann, Dr. Lara Overton, Dr. JoAnne Alvarez, Rhonda Meriwether, and Brandon Almas.

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The Bridge of Grace team was strengthened by the addition of:  
Becky Baker - Faith and Community Care Director  
Zack Spieth - Director of Operations  
Halle Tash - Youth Programs Assistant

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# HOUSING INITIATIVE

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Affordable housing remains a crisis in our country. To combat this in our community, Bridge of Grace works to turn neglected houses in southeast Fort Wayne into affordable homes for families, as well as help residents move toward home ownership by offering financial empowerment training. In 2025, we had:

- 7** homes renovated
- 5** homes under construction
- 150** volunteers
- 2,286** volunteer hours
- 26** financial empowerment and homeownership class participants

THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS AND VOLUNTEERS IN 2025, WE MADE STRIDES IN OUR COMMITMENT TO BUILDING THRIVING AND SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBORHOODS.

# PROGRESS

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Progress is measured by momentum and we are motivated more than ever to improve the quality of life for our neighbors.

In 2025, we celebrated the completion and reconstruction of Fairfax Avenue. Fairfax runs between Bridge of Grace and our neighborhood elementary school, Levan Scott Academy. Updates to the street, including making it a two-way road and new sidewalks, streetlights, gutters, and curbs, increased safety and accessibility for the families and residents of Mount Vernon Park. Bridge of Grace, Mount Vernon Park Neighborhood Association, and Fort Wayne Community Schools appreciate the work and legacy of the late Mayor Tom Henry whose commitment ensured Mount Vernon Park would see these improvements.

The latest improvements to the neighborhood's infrastructure adds to the \$40M investment we have seen in our area over the past five years.

**MORE TO CELEBRATE:** The Mount Vernon Park Neighborhood Association was awarded Association of the Year for their outstanding work partnering with local nonprofits, schools, and community organizations.



# BREWER PARK

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Brewer Park officially opened on September 3, 2025. Bridge of Grace joined with Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation and the Mount Vernon Park Neighborhood Association for a ribbon cutting and celebration.

In 2019, the Mount Vernon Park Neighborhood Association held a planning meeting with the Fort Wayne Parks Department in an effort to improve the quality of life for our neighbors. Now, we are witnessing the fruits of this collaboration and the beginning of a new era for the Mount Vernon Park neighborhood with 5.1 acres of recreation for southeast Fort Wayne residents.

Through our HOPE Unleashed capital campaign, and the generosity of our donors, \$500,000 was raised in support of the Brewer Park renovation.

## LEARN MORE

[bgministries.org/what-we-do/brewer-park](https://bgministries.org/what-we-do/brewer-park)



# MVP KIDS

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Bridge of Grace supports and champions the youth of Mount Vernon Park through MVP Kids: Afterschool program, summer camp, mentorship, and MVP Junior Leadership Academy. We strongly believe in building relationships in order to nurture and inspire students to fulfill their potential. During 2025:

**66** kids participated in our Afterschool program

**19** MVP Junior Leadership Academy participants

**144** Into the Wild summer camp attendees

**161** volunteers

## LEARN MORE

[bgministries.org/what-we-do/mvp-kids](https://bgministries.org/what-we-do/mvp-kids)



# BETTER TOGETHER

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PROUD TO SERVE SOUTHEAST FORT WAYNE  
WITH OUR ON-SITE PARTNERS IN 2025



# EARLY YEARS ACADEMY

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Early Years Academy, our on-site, high-quality developmental center that provides early care and education for children six weeks through pre-k, celebrated being open for one year in August 2025.

Partnered with Westminster Preschools, **19** staff members and **4** volunteers served **95** children in 2025.



**LEARN MORE**

[bgministries.org/what-we-do/early-years-academy](https://bgministries.org/what-we-do/early-years-academy)



# ALLIANCE HEALTH

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Our on-site partner, Alliance Health Centers, saw **6,323** patient visits in 2025. For over a year, Alliance Health has offered accessible and exceptional healthcare for southeast Fort Wayne from their Mount Vernon Park/Bridge of Grace campus location.

The Alliance Health clinic offers;

**FAMILY MEDICINE**  
**OB/GYN**  
**MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**  
**PSYCHIATRY**

# MVP LANDSCAPING

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Our first social enterprise, MVP Landscaping, was founded in 2018. The lawn maintenance and landscaping company services the greater Fort Wayne area and hires youth and young adult residents of southeast Fort Wayne to provide opportunities for career and skill development. To help produce indigenous leaders, we have created a culture that promotes influential relationships and action-oriented teamwork.

In 2025, MVP Landscaping employed **15** seasonal employees. The team received mentorship, professional development, and hands-on job training.

**LEARN MORE**

[mvplandscapingfw.com](http://mvplandscapingfw.com)



# BRIDGE THE GAP



The Bridge of Grace annual fall fundraiser, Bridge the Gap, celebrated 10 years of connecting Fort Wayne communities through this event in October 2025. The night featured a southeast Fort Wayne culinary experience, music, and awards.

Over **300** Bridge of Grace supporters attended Bridge the Gap 2025 and helped raise **\$152,387**.



**CATALYST OF HOPE**  
*Award Winner*  
**MATT GRAVES**



**LILLIAN NELSON**  
**COMMUNITY IMPACT**  
*Award Winner*  
**KERMITA ABRAHAM**



## SPRING FORWARD

Our spring fundraiser, Spring Forward, raised **\$46,558** benefiting our 2025 Housing Capital Campaign.

# FAITH & COMMUNITY

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With Christ at the center of our work at Bridge of Grace, we were led to add a new role to our team. As the Faith and Community Care Director, Becky Baker supports our staff and our neighbors with great intention. Our community and neighborhood outreach rose to a new level in 2025. From neighborhood dinners to volunteer opportunities, making connections and establishing relationships is at the heart of this ministry.

## MORNING FUEL - 14 PARTICIPANTS

Morning Fuel is a small group designed to support the women in Mount Vernon Park.

## TASTE OF COMMUNITY - 265 ATTENDEES

Taste of Community is a free dinner on Tuesday evenings available to Mount Vernon Park neighbors and created to help cultivate neighbor to neighbor relationships as well as with the Bride of Grace team. **29** volunteers prepared and helped serve meals in 2025.

## RAKE & BAKE - 64 VOLUNTEERS

Rake & Bake was a fall volunteer opportunity that encouraged neighbors to help fellow neighbors rake leaves and/or bake treats to enjoy together.



## HEAL CLASSES

In 2025, our campus hosted six HEAL cooking classes taught in Spanish with **8** attendees.

# CONVERSATIONS OVER COFFEE

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In an effort to promote learning and understanding of the complex subject of poverty, Bridge of Grace initiated Conversations Over Coffee in 2025. This six session morning series brought community members and leaders together from every corner of Fort Wayne to join in discussion and revelation.



From January to June, **38** participants leaned in with a desire to be part of the solution. The 2025 session topics included:

THE FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING POVERTY  
UNDERSTANDING CHRONIC VS. CRISIS AND BETTERMENT VS. DEVELOPMENT  
BEST PRACTICES IN RESPONDING TO POVERTY  
WEALTH CREATORS AND THE WEALTH PROCESSORS  
ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACH  
CALL TO ACTION - NEXT STEPS

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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## OUR PARTNERS IN HOPE - 2025



AMBASSADOR ENTERPRISES

ARTS UNITED



BROTHERHOOD MUTUAL

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF GREATER FORT WAYNE



COUNTY LINE CHURCH OF GOD

DON WOOD FOUNDATION



GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH



THE JOURNAL GAZETTE FOUNDATION

ST. JOSEPH COMMUNITY HEALTH FOUNDATION



WATERFIELD FOUNDATION

# TEAM BRIDGE OF GRACE

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JAVIER MONDRAGON | *Bridge of Grace*

ROB HAYWORTH | PRESIDENT | *Summit Financial Group*

PALERMO GALINDO | VICE PRESIDENT | *Consultant and Community Advocate*

ANDY BINKLEY | TREASURER | *Weigand Construction*

LARRY WHITE | SECRETARY | *Liberty Group Realty*

DR. JOANNE ALVAREZ | *Ivy Tech Community College (Warsaw)*

RHONDA MERIWETHER | *Fort Wayne Community Schools*

DR. LORA OVERTON | *Ivy Tech Community College (Fort Wayne)*

STEVEN HAYS | *Kendall Electronics, retired*

JEFF OSTERMANN | *Sweetwater*

BRANDON ALMAS | *Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company*

# TEAM BRIDGE OF GRACE

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## STAFF

**JAVIER MONDRAGON** | Founder/CEO

**KELLI PACKNETT** | Vice President, Education and Engagement

**JACQUELYN WALKUP** | Chief Financial Officer

**ZACK SPIETH** | Director of Operations

**CHRIS MINIER** | Director, Mount Vernon Park Development

**SIERRA DU BOSE** | Programs Director

**PATRICIA CORDERO** | Office Manager/Executive Assistant

**DENNIS SALAZAR** | Videographer/Grant Writer

**DAVID DE LEON** | Property Construction Manager

**JENNIFER PLATT** | Fund Development Administrator

**ZURI WILLIAMS** | Financial Assistant

**BECKY BAKER** | Faith and Community Care Director

**GENTEL MCGHEE** | MVP Landscaping General Manager

**FRANK LOPEZ** | MVP Landscaping Maintenance Coordinator

**HALLE TASH** | Youth Programs Assistant

**KRISTIN PACKNETT** | Marketing Coordinator



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