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ANNUAL REPORT


THE ARTISTS
COMMISSION





THE ARTISTS COMMISSION

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SCAN FOR
WEBSITE

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OUR PURPOSE

The Artist's Commission exists because we believe art — which reflects and greatly honors our Creator — is a powerful vehicle for sharing truth and beauty. Through paintings, spoken word, murals, art installations, and more, this year has been filled with creative ventures that have touched individual hearts and led to real Gospel transformation in the lives of thousands.

With Chester, Pennsylvania as our home base, The Artist's Commission serves locally through Legacy Arts Chester, nationally through Painting Freedom, and internationally through The Poema Project — all united by one calling: to reach the world with the Gospel through the arts.



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"What could God do through a visual arts ministry that is surrendered to Him?" This was the question I pondered in my heart at 16 years old as I drove away from a park in Philadelphia where I had spent the last 4 hours painting and sharing the Gospel. I then sat down with a drawing pad and started sketching out ideas and visions for what "Arts and Missions" would look like.

That vision was far too small.

What has happened this past year with The Artist's Commission has far exceeded what 16 year old Tucker had imagined. I have seen Satanists and trafficking victims come to Christ at Painting Freedom events, as thousands have flooded forward in repentance and surrender. I have sat with Chester residents, who weep with joy at the site of their city being transformed through our mural initiatives. I have laughed and created with our Legacy students every week, watching them find their place in our programs and grow as young men and women of character. I have tasted fresh water from our well at The Poema Project and seen this beautiful school rise from the dust of the African wilderness, soon to be home for hundreds of Tanzanian children in need.

All because of God, your faithfulness and the surrendered hands of The Artist's Commission team.

What could God do through a visual arts ministry surrendered to him?
Absolutely, anything He wants.

TUCKER RODKEY

Executive Director



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Last year, I signed off my letter by challenging you to pray big, bold prayers for what God might do in the year ahead. As I look back over 2025, I am convinced you took that challenge seriously, and the Lord has answered in ways that leave us humbled and grateful. The report before you tells the story: this has been the most impactful year in our ministry's history. That isn't exaggeration; the numbers confirm it at every level.

This incredible year reflects God's faithfulness, and it also showcases the dedication, talent, and leadership of our Executive Director, Tucker Rodkey. In 2025 we transitioned Tucker into a full-time role, a step of faith for both him and the Board. The results documented here make it clear that this decision has significantly expanded our ministry's reach and effectiveness. Please take time to read and celebrate along with us!

From the Board of Directors, from Tucker, and from our remarkable volunteers, thank you for the generosity, prayer, and advocacy that make this ministry possible. You linked arms with us this year, and we are grateful. And just as you did before, we invite you to continue praying those big, bold prayers in the year ahead.

Existing to reach the world with the Gospel through the Arts,

STEPHEN SMICKLEY

President of the Board



THE TEAM



TUCKER RODKEY *Executive Director & Founder*

A live painter since age 17, Tucker founded Painting Freedom at 22. His evangelist heart, artistic skill, and strategic leadership have grown the organization into three branches reaching locally, nationally, and internationally.



STEPHEN SMICKLEY *President, Board of Directors*

A longtime pastor with a heart for evangelism and pastoral care, Steve provides spiritual leadership and guidance. He and his wife Kristen live in Delaware.



SUE HOWAT *Treasurer*

With years of experience in administration and bookkeeping for local government agencies, Sue provides stability, accountability, and faithful stewardship.



NIKKOLE MCNEIL *Board Member & Studio Arts Leader*

An artist, educator, and seminary graduate, Nikkole brings extensive experience serving students and at-risk youth through art and ministry.



JEFF WILHELM *Board Member*

Director of Hope Distributed in Harrisonburg, Virginia, Jeff is passionate about meeting practical needs while sharing the love of Jesus. He and his wife Lindsey have three children.



KATIE MADONNA *Director of Development*

With experience in marketing and communications in higher education, academic publishing, and beyond, Katie brings the organization's stories to life through newsletters, events, public relations, and donor outreach.



BENJAMIN HEIDENGREN *PartnerCare Coordinator*

Husband, father of four, and writer, Ben works as a neuro-rehabilitation technician, helping people heal from brain injuries. In this role, he is dedicated to regular outreach, follow-up, and prayer for our partners.



KATARINA SINDONI *MakerSpace Leader*

A self-taught artist, Katarina helps students see discarded materials as tools for creating beauty and meaning.

LEGACY

ARTS CHESTER

LEGACY ARTS CHESTER

Located in Chester, Pennsylvania, Legacy Arts Chester (LAC) is a weekly youth development program that trains students in the visual arts while surrounding them with consistent mentorship, community, and hope. In a city where most schools lack funding for art education, LAC exists to fill the gap.

OUR PROGRAMS

MakerSpace: Weekly sessions for elementary students

Legacy Arts Club: Weekly lessons for middle schoolers

Studio Arts: Advanced art classes for high school students



The background of the entire page is a warm, orange-toned photograph of an art studio. In the upper left, a child is focused on a craft project. In the center, a man in a white apron stands near a colorful mural of a man's face. To the right, a woman with long dark hair is working on a project with a yellow glue gun. The bottom of the image shows various art supplies like glue sticks and a geometric patterned object.

2025 IMPACT

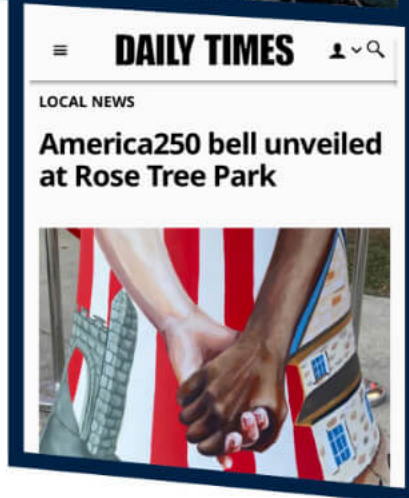
- Provided 320 hours of free, high-quality art programming
- Sponsored 22 weeks of summer camp for Legacy students
- Painted murals for 245 hours throughout Chester, PA
- Completed our flagship mural, “Sunflowers,” now visible from I-95 – a public testimony of hope in Chester

More than paint on a wall or brushstrokes on a canvas, Legacy Arts Chester is built on relationships. Our team meets students where they are, walks with them through life, and consistently points them toward hope, purpose, and ultimately, the Truth.

IN THE NEWS

LEGACY ARTS CHESTER APPEARED IN THE NEWS THREE TIMES IN 2025.

- **SUNFLOWERS MURAL IN CHESTER**
- **AMERICA250 BELL UNVEIL AT ROSE TREE PARK**
- **COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION IN SUN VILLAGE, CHESTER**



COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

In 2025, Executive Director Tucker Rodkey was honored as a The Missing Plug 2025 Award recipient. Founded in 2013 by Crystal Burrell, The Missing Plug exists to celebrate Black excellence in Chester and beyond. During the award presentation, Burrell shared:

The Missing Plug Awards is a show for the Black community, celebrating Black excellence. It's an awards show owned by us, created for us—but when we have people that don't look like us but have the same drive and love for our community, we don't want to shut them out. Tucker, we're honored you'll accept the 2025 Legacy Award for Legacy Arts Chester.

CRYSTAL BURRELL

Missing Plug Founder





When I think of the word legacy, I don't think of a definition, I see a picture. It's a picture of our children's children walking the clean streets of Chester, breathing clean air, and living under the light of murals, completely unafraid. Our legacy will be that they won't know any different. They'll think this is how things have always been and how things will always be.

TUCKER RODKEY

Executive Director



Impact Highlight // *The Sunflowers Mural*

Towering over Chester and visible from I-95, the Sunflowers mural stands as a bold, public declaration of beauty, dignity, and hope. More than a piece of public art, this mural represents hundreds of hours of work, mentorship, collaboration, and prayer — a living testimony that light can flourish even in the most overlooked places.

Painted City Flagship Building

Beautifying Our City, One Block At A Time

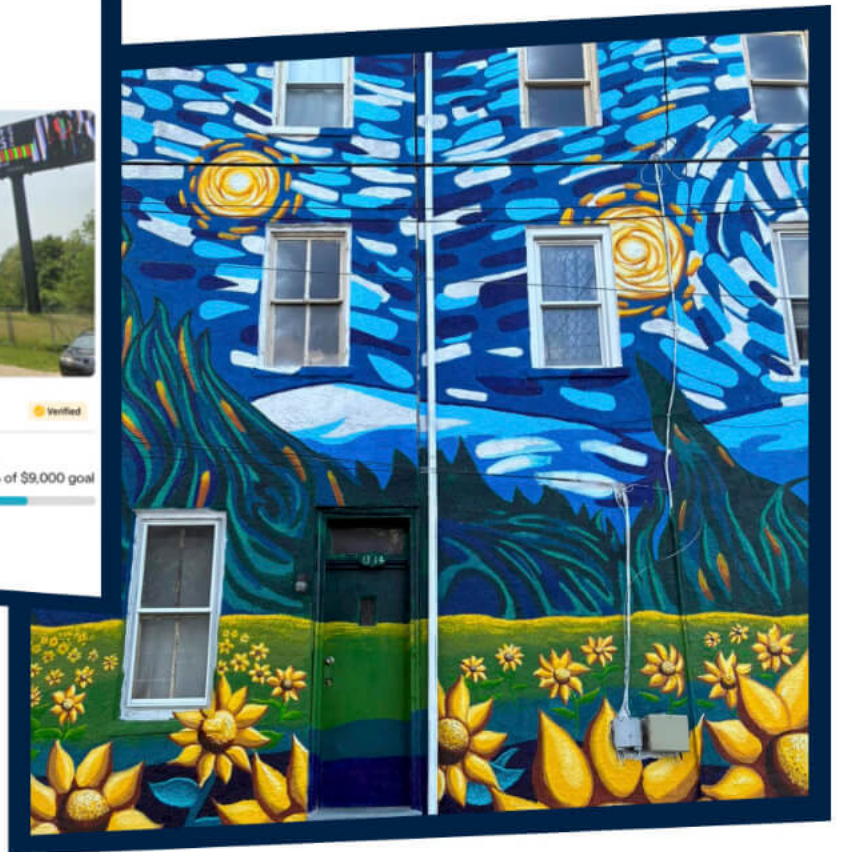


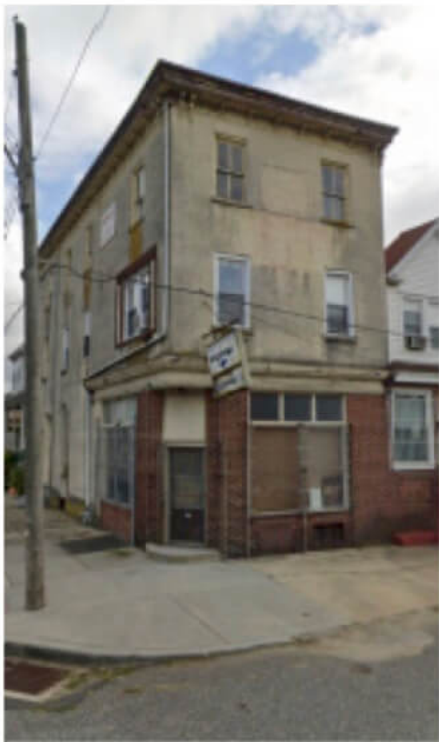
Organized by [The Artist's Commission](#) →

Verified

\$8,155 65 Supporters

90% of \$9,000 goal





BEFORE



IN PROGRESS



IN PROGRESS



The Sunflowers Mural //
completed in August 2025





PAINTING FREEDOM

Criss-crossing the country, Painting Freedom is the national touring ministry of The Artist's Commission. Through speed painting, spoken word, biblical teaching, and dynamic visuals, each event offers a multisensory Gospel experience that leaves a lasting impression.

With paint on our hands and the Good News declared with boldness and clarity, we press forward with one aim: *to make heaven crowded.*



2025 IMPACT

- Participated in 122 outreach events across retreats, conferences, and communities
- Personally engaged more than 10,000 people with the Gospel
- Prayed with 1,650 individuals who dedicated their lives to Jesus for the first time

From youth camps and recovery meetings to festivals and marriage retreats, Painting Freedom continues to reach hearts through the power of the image and the truth of the Word.



P O E M A

THE POEMA PROJECT

Partnering with the Africa Inland Church (AIC) in Tanzania, The Poema Project connects churches and sponsors to children living in extreme poverty, offering education, nourishment, and Gospel-centered hope.

LOOKING AHEAD: 2026 POEMA PROJECT MISSION TRIP

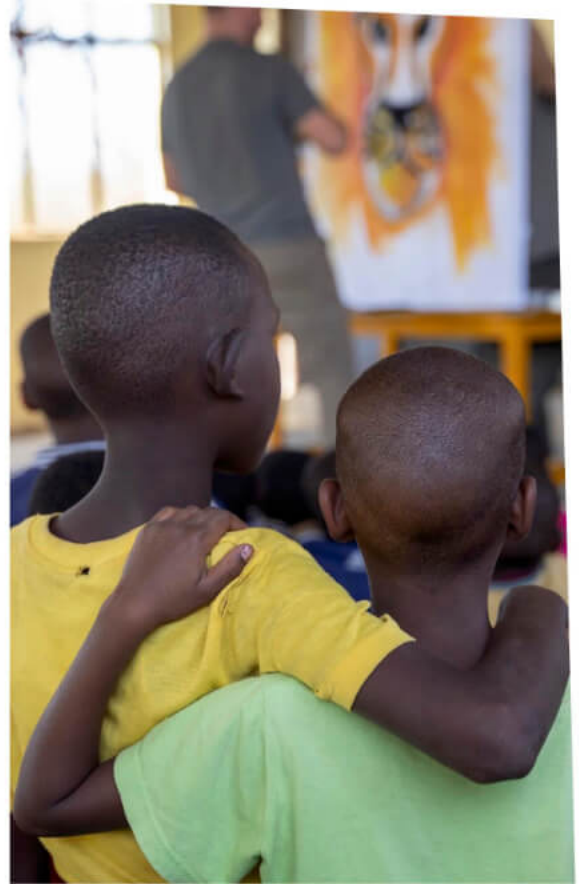
This summer from June 12-26, we're sending a team on a mission trip to Tanzania. This life-changing trip will include leading a youth program, connecting with and encouraging local Christians, and serving our partnership community through creative ministry and outreach. The team will stay in the newly finished administration building. We've also begun laying the foundation for the newest school building which will be finished this year.



2025 IMPACT

- Served 400 Tanzanian students through summer camp
- Provided more than 1,500 meals
- Hosted The Poema Experience at five churches across the Northeast, inviting participants to engage deeply with the Tanzanian story and partner in lasting change.

From the United States to Tanzania, The Poema Project is helping children move from desperation to hope — and from survival to purpose.



2025 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Total Expenses - \$206,471

Events & Fundraisers	\$ 4,621.99
Legacy Arts Chester	\$ 36,767.09
Painting Freedom	\$ 30,832.13
The Poema Project	\$ 53,885
Staffing	\$ 62,608.63
Facilities and Fees	\$ 5,611.50
Supplies	\$ 7,122.91
Technology	\$ 5,021.48

In 2025, total revenue grew to \$237,743, up significantly from \$166,966 the previous year — an increase that reflects expanding support and growing momentum across our three initiatives. This growth allowed us to broaden our programming, increasing the number of murals and community events in Chester, add more events to the Painting Freedom calendar, and advance construction efforts for the Poema Project in Tanzania.

We were especially encouraged to welcome 71 new donors through our summer Painted City campaign, expanding our community of supporters. As we humbly enter this year with a surplus, we are positioned for an even greater impact in 2026 — expanding free art programs in Chester for youth, continuing to beautify Chester through public murals, increasing Painting Freedom reach through events including major national conferences, accelerating the development of new buildings for the Poema Project in Tanzania, and adding a necessary part-time PartnerCare staff position to support each and every one of our partners.

We remain grateful for your support!

All restricted funds were used in accordance with donor intent.

WHAT'S AHEAD

As we look to the coming year, The Artist's Commission is stepping into a season of meaningful growth and deepened impact.

Legacy Arts Chester will provide more than 500 hours of free programming to 80+ families, continuing to invest in creative formation, mentorship, and opportunity for youth in our community.

Painting Freedom has already scheduled 80+ outreach days, bringing art, encouragement, and hope directly into neighborhoods and spaces that need it most.

Through *The Poema Project*, a team of eight will travel to Tanzania for a mission trip that will expand our commitment to long-term partnership and sustainable development for the people we serve in the community.

In addition, we look forward to the creation of new murals locally and nationally, and the launch of our brand-new podcast, extending our mission through story and conversation.

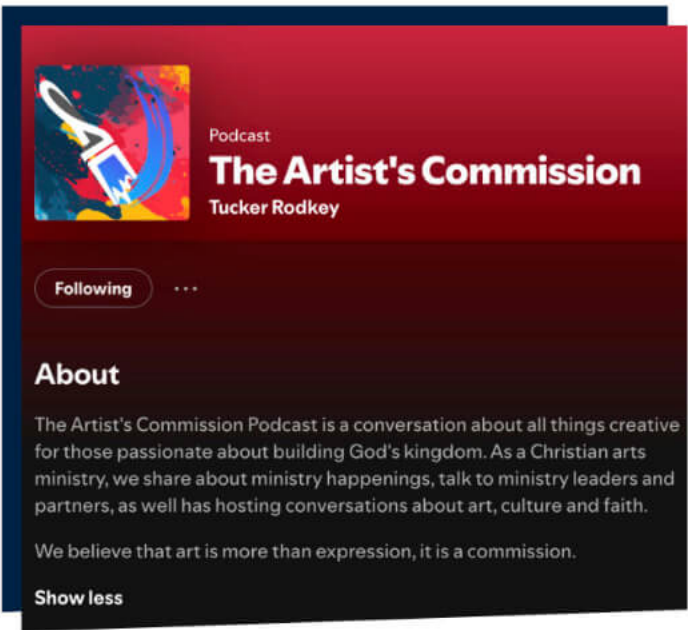
Across every branch of our work, we remain committed to infusing lasting hope into every relationship, art lesson, Gospel presentation, partnership, and experience.



The Artist’s Commission Podcast — *Now Live!*

Born out of conversations with many of you, we’re thrilled to share one of our biggest 2026 initiatives: The Artist’s Commission Podcast.

In this space, we’ll share stories, explore calling and craft, offer tutorials, and speak honestly about what it looks like to live as an artist with purpose. Whether you create full-time, part-time, or are simply curious about the journey God has you on, this podcast is an invitation — to listen, to learn, and to step a little more boldly into what you were made to do.



STAY CONNECTED IN 2026

The Artist's Commission is deeply grateful for the generosity of its supporters and partners. Your prayers, participation, and giving make this work possible.

THIS YEAR, WILL YOU JOIN US? HERE'S HOW!

Pray: For effective Gospel impact across every branch.

Recruit: Students of all ages are welcome at Legacy Arts Chester.

Invite: Book Painting Freedom for your next event.

Volunteer: Artists, travelers, poets — we can use you!

Support: Individual, monthly or via church and business partnerships.

Follow Along: On Instagram and Facebook.

**TOGETHER, WE ARE REACHING THE
WORLD WITH THE GOSPEL THROUGH
THE ARTS.**



**SCAN CODE TO
DONATE TODAY!**