

CentralDetroitChristian

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Visit our updated website at www.detcdc.org

Letter from the Executive Director

CDC is a community development corporation and our vision is to be an agent of change creating a community of choice. Sounds good, however lately I have been toying with the idea of changing community development to community transformation. Community transformation is the restoration of relationships within communities that have experienced fragmentation. One cannot seek transformation of individuals without also seeking transformation of the complex institutions in which individuals live. And conversely, one cannot address the inequities of institutions without also addressing the concerns of the individual. Jesus, throughout his earthly ministry did not separate himself from the bitter struggles of humanity's experiences rather He chose to meet humanity in the context of earthly place. (Michael Mata, Toward a Theology of Community Transformation). We need to keep in mind that the end goal is restoration; first with the Father through Jesus Christ, second with each other, and third with the principalities.

In this newsletter, we wanted to share with you some of our community development projects that prayerfully address being transformative and restorative. They go hand in hand with our direct ministry with youth and families. We often refer to our tandem work as an Ezra / Nehemiah approach. Ezra performed the priestly functions while Nehemiah rebuilt the wall and restored the community physically. Their ministries complimented each other.

Presently, Central Detroit Christian CDC runs four businesses, a fifth if you include property management of Second Avenue Apartments (the 11 unit apartment building we renovated). We also do housing ministry on multiple levels: housing counseling for homeowners in financial crisis and homebuyer education which hopefully prevents the financial crisis; housing rehabs which puts families into homes as homeowners and builds their equity; neighborhood beautification and board ups; and the stabilization of the Boston Edison Historic District, a 900 home sub-community within the central Detroit community. The pages herein will hopefully give you a glimpse of the community development/transformational things that CDC does. May God bless you for reading.

Lisa j

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Restoration Warehouse

We have a unique way of restoring our community and it's not housing development, or should I say it's not housing development that we do. Restoration Warehouse is a 9000 square foot warehouse that we bought from the county for \$50. We had to do a lot of restoration to get it looking like it presently does, but it is now open for business. Well actually it is closed for the winter and is scheduled to reopen on March 15th. Members of the community and people from around the region converge upon the warehouse looking for items to beautify or renovate their home. Why here? Because we receive tons of donated goods from Home Depot and Bed, Bath & Beyond. Sure we ask for a donation to cover our costs (about 10% of value), but people get a real deal on some great new items that improve their home and bring beauty to the neighborhood. Also housed in Restoration Warehouse is a community laundry and a community tool room. From March 15—December 15 the warehouse is open Fridays from 12-5 and Saturdays from 9-12noon. We have hired 2 people from the community to manage the warehouse and have many members from the community volunteer.

THANKS and PRAISE

- Thanksgiving distribution with Kensington Community Church serving 630 families!
- Thanksgiving outreach with the Rojec crew at the Chatham Apartments serving 150 meals on Thanksgiving day!
- Pride for Parents Christmas Store gave 165 parents the opportunity to shop for gifts for their families. Giving was down by 33% so we served less families, but God showed up for a joyous day.
- A new 12 passenger van! What a great Christmas gift.
- Some wonderful year end gifts which enabled us to finish our year strong. Thank you friends!



Café Sunshine

Open now for 8 months, Café Sunshine is a sit down restaurant serving up healthy soul food for lunch and dinner six days a week. Sure you can still get fried catfish and barbequed ribs, but you can also order baked tilapia, smothered turkey chops, and baked chicken. The various sides, too numerous to mention, have one thing in common—no table salt is added in the food preparation. You the customer decide whether to add and just how much. Our chef, Becky, a diabetic herself, wants to make sure that our food is friendly to those with diabetes, high blood pressure, hypertension, or heart problems (all very real issues in our community), and it is! Our prices are very reasonable, the food is good and the highlight for many is that you don't have to order your food through a layer of bullet proof glass. We do cater and also offer a great southern style desert line including 5 layer carmel cake, coconut cake, sweet potato pie, peach cobbler, and banana pudding. Lest this sound too much like an advertisement, it is important to note that we are offering healthy eating options and addressing health issues that plague our community through this restaurant. We also are able to accept EBT/Bridge cards from customers in our community who are homeless, senior citizens and/or physically handicapped. If you come and visit you will be waited on by someone who lives in the community as we strive to hire only from our community.

AquaPONICS

What? It will be all the rage soon enough, but aquaponics is plain and simple, fish farming. This spring, we will start our fish farm and raise our own catfish and tilapia. The process is all natural, and the end in a short time is fish. First we will use the fish grown to supply our own restaurant (hey that's locally grown) and then we will also sell to customers. A small business, but it will probably employ 2-3 people and that is a major thing in a community where the unemployment rate is 50%+. Aquaponics is another step towards making the community self sufficient; where the dollar cycles through the community instead of immediately out to the suburbs.

Peaches & Greens



Access to affordable, high quality fresh produce has been a big problem in our community and throughout the city of Detroit which ranks as one of the worst food deserts worldwide. Enter Peaches & Greens, a produce store and mobile truck. The store services the immediate area with fresh produce while the truck travels a two mile radius from the store delivering fresh fruits and vegetables in the same fashion as an ice cream truck to more isolated areas of our community. Food justice is our aim. Without the opportunity to select healthy food, people in our community, and others just like it, are forced to eat unhealthy (high sugar, fructose, corn syrup) options. And no, this is not a free food handout. This is a business designed to provide a commodity, employ people and one day, make a profit. About 25% of our customers are children who, if healthy habits can be developed early, can change the face of our community. Our garden & nutrition coordinator teaches a weekly nutrition and cooking class to again reinforce healthy eating. It is the foundation to good learning. It is the foundation for a healthy community.



Go Go GARDENS

Our growing season is short, but there is nothing like a garden fresh tomato. From a community development perspective, our gardens add beauty to the neighborhood and they provide fresh produce to members who participate in the garden preparations and weeding and maintenance of the gardens. From an economic development perspective, fresh produce becomes a sellable product sold at the Eastern Market (a few of our teens made money this past summer selling produce), sold to a local baker (we got \$13 a pound for Basil, but do you know how much basil you have to pick to make up one pound?), and sold fresh from the garden produce at our produce market at a reduced price because we cut out the middle man. Gardening is not just a leisure activity, it is an entrepreneurial endeavor at a most basic level and it gives our community the opportunity to again be self reliant.

Second Ave. APARTMENTS

Effective January 1, 2011, Central Detroit Christian CDC took over the management of Second Avenue Apartments, an 11 unit tax credit project we developed 5 years ago. The building was developed to provide high quality, safe, efficient apartments for low income families and/or individuals. It didn't always get the tender loving care that it needed and deserved from our former property manager, but now it is in our hands. We have hired from within our staff ranks to do maintenance and accounting and additionally contracted services to handle all the government compliance issues. We restored this old building 5 years ago and hope that it can be utilized as a place of restoration for people who rent an apartment there. We see it already happening.



UPCOMINGRehabs

At the October tax auction we purchased 741 Pingree and 823 Pingree for \$500 each. They both are single family homes and are located on a block that we as an organization have significant investment. Our present model of housing renovation, is to encourage church sponsorship of a home for the cost of materials. The church and the prospective homeowner share in the labor to renovate the house. Then upon completion for a modest land contract payment, a family has immediate equity/family wealth. This is the final step in the community transformation model: give a man a fish (charity); teach a man to fish (development, but still a focus on survival); owning the pond (transformation—power). If your church is interested in undertaking such a project, please let us know.



The Stabilization of the BOSTON EDISON HISTORIC DISTRICT

Central Detroit Christian CDC is leading the charge in stabilizing the Boston Edison Historic District. We know that we must get vacated homes renovated and occupied in this middle income neighborhood so that there can be a ripple effect that carries into the low income sub-communities that surround the District. We owned 9 homes in Boston Edison, but in the past year were able to sell one home as is; renovate one home; and partially renovate the third home. This year we will rehab 4 homes starting with this one pictured.



BOARD UPS and BEAUTIFICATION

This past year we, in cooperation with volunteer groups, boarded up 24 vacant and abandoned homes in an attempt to make our neighborhood a safe place for children. For fun, some volunteers painted murals on buildings with our kids. Transformation? Look at that building. Doesn't it look great now?



HIGHER GROUND LANDSCAPING

This past summer we started up lawn care services to maintain the vacant land and properties we own. Chase Foundation, who originally purchased the commercial lawn mower for us liked what they saw and gave us the seed money to launch a full scale landscaping company this spring. We will hire 6-8 young men from the community to mow lawns as a business with the hope of generating enough revenue so that the endeavor can continue the next year and the next and so on. We saw transformation in the lives of the men we hired this past summer season as a job gives you dignity. More dignity for more men.

48202 The Central Detroit Community

Our ministry area is zip code 48202, one of the poorest neighborhoods in Michigan. God has called us to be salt and light in communities of need. In central Detroit...

- 71% of households earn less than \$25,000 per year
- Approximately 35.2% of households live below the federally prescribed poverty rate
- 40.9% of the adult population does not have a high school diploma
- 1 out of every 2 households do not have access to private transportation
- 73% of households with children have no father living in the home
- Only 18.4% of households with children are headed by a married couple



CDC

Creating Change!



Since our last newsletter, we would like to acknowledge and thank our foundation, corporate and church partners who made contributions during this time period. While we have many individual friends of CDC who also contributed during this time, we desire to protect their privacy by not listing their names.

Thanks to all for your contributions!

Skillman Foundation
Clannad Foundation
LISC
Home Depot
The River Church
Corporate FACTS
Flagstar Bank

Kresge Foundation
Bank of America
MSHDA
OakPointe Church
Novo Nordisc
St. Mary of the Hills
USDA

JP Morgan Chase Foundation
Stonisich Foundation
Kensington Community Church
Ward Presbyterian
Fairfield Christian Church
The Johnson Foundation
Highland Park Baptist Church

Greenman's Printing & Imaging
Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative
Trinity Presbyterian Church
Faith Covenant Church
Wells Fargo Foundation
Grace Community Church
Highland Congregational Church
Faith with Works in Christ Ministry



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