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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2011

A Note from Sarah

This summer has been bursting with activity that is keeping all of us on our toes. When one thing is done, we hardly have time to relish in its completion for the next thing that's around the corner. We are blessed with lots of partners and people initiating awesome, SHALOM-seeking work and play. Preparing this e-newsletter feels a bit like trying to zip up an over-packed suitcase. So, prepare for a packed end-of-summer treat! Here you'll find sweet transformation stories that breathe and whisper through their black and white letters, "We are alive! We are rebuilding!" I am inspired by you all to keep seeking SHALOM in the City!

Sarah

[back to top](#)



CATCH Camp Concludes

WHAT YOU CAN DO...

Support our Bethany Housing Program

We assure you it is a Safe, Secure, & Simple way to contribute.



Sacred Suds Needs

Sacred Suds is in great need of HE (High Efficiency) Laundry Detergent. These new hoity-toity machines demand this special kind of HE detergent. (They promise a greater life-expectancy and fewer maintenance issues). Help us be good stewards of the new machines?

Click below to hear from one of Sacred Suds' neighbors and volunteers. Stop in and visit us any day. We'll guarantee you a laugh!



140 children registered for CATCH Camp this summer. The picture above is from the last day of CATCH Camp, early in the morning when the group was bound for MI's Adventure. See those bright eyes? You'd never know it was 7:30 AM! *Click above right image for a Muskegon Chronicle on Catch Camp*



We want to thank each business, church and individual that made a contribution to the summer C.A.T.C.H. Camp. Words can't describe the smiles that filled the faces of the camp kids. Because of your desire to reach out, we were able to provide a fun-filled, learning environment all summer long for our neighborhood children.

CATCH Camp kids went to the Whitecaps ballgame, swam at the YMCA, hiked on the dunes at P.J. Hoffmaster State Park, fished at Muskegon State Park. We took field trips to Michigan's Adventure, Frederick Meijer Garden, The Annis Water Research Facility and the Jackson Research Vessel. We offered a summer reading program, dance, art, and music lessons, and sports games. They say that the greatest investment you can give a child is time. We had seven weeks together to build relationships, laugh, play and make new friends. From the words of one of the camp kids, "This was the best camp ever. I hope we can do this next summer". You touched the hearts of many. *Click above right image to see a WZZM news story on Catch Camp*



Thank you,

Charlotte Johnson,
Healthy Neighborhood Project Coordinator

[back to top](#)

Consider this. . . .



You can download our most recent enPulse newsletter here for offline reading: [Summer 2011 enPulse](#)



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Recently we received notice that our Bethany Housing Program would not be receiving the Emergency Solutions Grant. We've received this funding for over 10 years, and the impact of the funding cut is significant. We are currently re-evaluating our program, in light of the mission and vision of Community enCompass. There are certain facts:



- Affordable housing provision is, in many ways, the legacy of Community enCompass. It's our oldest program (over 20 years old!).
- We believe in building neighborhoods from the inside out and that means holding the creative tension between building families (focusing on individual needs/assets), as well as creating a strong, stable neighborhood (focusing on community needs/assets).
- We know that providing affordable housing is essential to building a strong and stable community, especially when combined with the expectation that residents participate in neighborhood life through leadership development and volunteerism.
- We believe that seeking to "grow people" is a way for us to move towards our vision of SHALOM in the City.

In the past year, we have provided affordable, transitional and supportive housing to 78 people, including 35 children. All of these individuals were homeless when they came to our program. Of those who completed our program, 100% found secure housing that they have maintained. Three of the families moved into our home ownership program.

Our Transitional Housing Program operates by offering participants in the program a subsidy in order to reduce the financial burden for housing and allowing them to simply afford housing and/or repair poor credit histories. The subsidy for a 1 bedroom is \$191 per month, a 2 bedroom is \$276 per month, and a 3 bedroom is \$394 per month. If you would like to assist a family to remain in our Transitional Housing program please consider designating your tax-deductible donation to Bethany Housing.

Pray for us as we navigate changes in the next few months.

[back to top](#)

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YEP Graduates

“Josh almost quit the first day I had him,” recalls B. Anthony, YEP Coordinator. “He was working on my lawn crew and one of the other YEPs started giving him a hard time saying, ‘You telling me you can’t even cut grass?’ Josh started to walk away saying, ‘I’m fittin’ to go home. This is crazy.’” He started out rough, but Josh became the hardest worker that B has ever seen in the program. “He’s the only one that was chasing down job applications while he was working for us. He just knew that YEP was just a stepping stone.” Josh had some real challenges that could have stopped him, too. “He was basically homeless while he was working with us. Got kicked out of his mom’s house, and basically was couch-surfing for a while. It was rough.”

Josh had to go through two interviews to get hired in a Eagle Alloy. Just this week he called B to “check up on him and the YEPs. When B asked how the job was he answered, *“I’m not messing with you, it’s hard work. I’m not much of a church guy, you know. Actually the first time I ever stepped foot in a church was for our YEP classes at New Life. But everyday before I enter that building, I stop and pray that God will give me the strength to make it through day.”* He knows that he’s not just judged by his peers but by his production. And he’s proud to say, *“Since I started, no one has put out more quality parts than I have.”* This is a guy who’s learned the ethic of work and pride in his work. We are proud of you, Josh! Keep reaching, man! You can do it!



Also, we are so grateful to the Community Foundation for Muskegon County for their grant towards our Youth Employment Program. Their grant will allow us to hire 15 additional youth this year, for a total of 45 neighborhood youth employed and trained!

[back to top](#)

