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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2011

Recently the Community enCompass board set aside some time to step away from regular board business and think more broadly about where Community enCompass is and where it's headed. When we get down to the core reason for why Community enCompass exists, we end up with phrases like "Neighborhood Transformation" and "Shalom in the City." Lofty dreams coming from a rag-tag team of people--staff and board--who are often stumbling towards good. And I wonder how do we know once we've arrived? How will we know when our neighborhoods have been transformed and tasted shalom?



I heard a pastor speak recently on the Old Testament book of Zechariah, chapter 8, and paint a picture that helped me start to see how neighborhoods will look, feel, act differently when they have been revitalized.

- The old will be honored and the children will play freely. *A revitalized neighborhood is great place to grow old in and a great place to grow up in!*
- People will work together joyfully, hopefully, and productively.
- Unity will be restored through the pursuit of truth and justice.
- The rhythms of life will be marked by festivals of joy and gladness.
- Others will sense the presence of God and seek God's blessing there. *People will begin to move back into the city's neighborhoods!*

This is the picture of transformation that we seek for our neighborhoods, with our neighbors. This, the

WHAT YOU CAN DO...

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shalom that we long to live into. Humbly, we walk towards that vision of hope.

Shalom in the City,
Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga, Executive Director

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2010: A summary of numbers. . . .

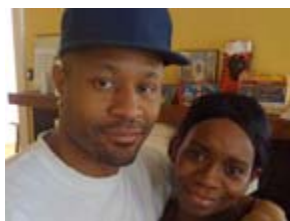
Sacred Suds: In 2010, 6,140 loads of laundry washed, and 913 showers. Close to 2,500 volunteer hours were logged just at Sacred Suds!



Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program: Volunteers brought back over \$230,000 to our neighbors through tax credits. Read a recent [Muskegon Chronicle article](#) about a family that has benefitted from this program.



Bethany Housing: Total housed in supportive housing: 27 singles; 18 adults in families; 29 children. Of the 10 graduates: 4 to rental housing; 1 to subsidized housing; 5 to home ownership.



Housing Rehab: Over \$300,000 invested in home rehabilitations in McLaughlin Neighborhood.



McLaughlin Grows Urban Farm: 16 neighborhood youth employed; 8 Neighbor Adult Volunteers. Produce sold: \$3,200.



Youth Employment Program: 28 neighborhood youth employed earning \$33,012 in wages; Of the 17



graduates: 10 found employment; 7 enrolled in higher-education; 3 completed their GED.



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Love In Action Award

Charlotte Johnson, our McLaughlin Healthy Neighborhood Project Coordinator, was honored as a Nominee for the Love In Action Award on February 24th! Here a clip of her acceptance speech here:



Congratulations, Charlotte! If you'd like to send her a note of congratulations: hnp@communityencompass.org.

Watch a part of Charlotte's acceptance speech on [YouTube](#).

The McLaughlin Healthy Neighborhood Project is done in collaboration with Bethany Church, Community enCompass, the McLaughlin Neighborhood Association, Agape Christian Fellowship, New Life Christian Center, and the PTO of the McLaughlin Elementary School.

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In 2011, McLaughlin Grows Urban Farm will be offering a CSA program as part of its strategy to reach out to the community. What is CSA? A system where a farm offers a certain number of "shares" to the public. Shares consist of the farm produce: vegetables, herbs, fruits....whatever is in season. Interested consumers purchase a "share" and in return receive a basket of season produce each week throughout the farming season.



We are seeking community leaders to invest with us this first year and be willing to "grow with McLaughlin Grows" for a year, while we work out this pilot.

Why should you choose McLaughlin Grows for your CSA? Our CSA is unique because it supports our job training program for neighborhood youth! This is an opportunity to invest with other community leaders in a social enterprise that benefits the neighborhood, neighborhood youth who are employed, and our local food system!! One of our new CSA members comments, "I like your social mission. It is something I mention when I tell people about McGrows. I tell people they can do good for others while eating good, fresh food."

Our customers are important to us and we hope you'll give us a chance to wow you with our fresh vegetable shares, grown with organic practices.

Find more information about pricing variety by accessing our [brochure](#).

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