



ISAAC — DOING JUSTICE

*An interfaith organizing network of congregations and strategic partners
working together to build a more just community*

December 2012

“Ceasefire” coming to Kalamazoo

by Brendan Flanagan, ISAAC Director

I would like to begin by thanking Chief Hadley for his “100%” support of our “Ceasefire” initiative, and Rev. Dr. Michael Scott for his leadership in the Northside Ministerial Alliance’s unanimous vote to be the “moral voice of the community” in implementing “Ceasefire”.

“Ceasefire” is David M. Kennedy’s approach that has dramatically reduced youth violence in other cities. It entails direct communication with violent groups, and forming a partnership between law enforcement, social service providers, and leaders of impacted communities. Together the partnership delivers a unified “no violence” message, offers alternatives and services to the youth, and explains that continued violence will bring strong consequences.

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The Promise & Chamber partner with ISAAC

by Tobi Hanna-Davies

“For HALF the cost of providing shelter, we could provide places to call home for people who are homeless!” “Over 1600 school children experienced homelessness in Kalamazoo County last year!” “Other cities SAVE money by reducing homelessness. People with a place to call home *do so much better* than people in shelters and on the streets, that hospitals, public safety departments and schools all save money!” “We know what to do! The Local Housing Assistance Fund is a great example.”

When the ISAAC Housing Task Force presented these facts at the ISAAC Public Meeting, the Promise and the Chamber were there to respond with their support.



Robert Jorth, Executive Administrator of the Kalamazoo Promise, and Chris Praedel, Director of Communications at the Kalamazoo Regional Chamber of Commerce, made public their commitment to help end homelessness.

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OH WHAT A NIGHT! WOW!

THANK YOU, KALAMAZOO COMMUNITY FOR YOUR STRONG SUPPORT of the 2012 ISAAC Public Meeting. It was an awesome evening! We are still excited about the wonderful events that took place. As excited as we are, our primary focus is not only on the achievements that occurred on October 11th; but, we want to begin to put our energy toward the tremendous victories that will be accomplished in the near future. It has taken **all** of us to bring us to this point, and it will take **all** of us to make it to our promised destination.



Elder Doug King

(Cont’d on page 3)

COMING SOON: Countywide Public Transit for Kalamazoo!

by Jeremy Orr, ISAAC organizer

Kalamazoo, which is known for being on the cutting-edge of economic development, has decided to remain ahead of the curve once again by coordinating public

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New Parent Education initiative

by Clarence “CJ” Jones

On 10/11/12 the big ISAAC Public Meeting occurred that only happens every two years. It’s the time when hundreds of community members of different faiths, races and cultures, all gather to meet with community leaders with the power to make changes that build a more just community. Each task force presents a policy change that would help address their issue. The community leaders make public commitments to the support they are willing to give to ISAAC proposals to better the lives of people in the Kalamazoo area.

Children of different ages starred in the Education Task Force presentation on the need for more parent education. The baby went, “Whaa!” The two-year-old, “No! No!” The four year-old, “Why? Why?” The pre-teen asked her parents to show their love for her from afar, so her friends would think that she is cool. The teenager said, “Would you please drop me

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Transportation (continued from page 1)

transit services provided by two separate city and county agencies; Kalamazoo Metro Transit and the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority.



The Executive Directors of both transit agencies--William Schomisch (Metro Transit) & Sean McBride (KCTA)--announced that they would commit to working in close relationship with one another.

These efforts will mark the first time in Michigan history that multiple transit agencies have come together to provide efficient, unified service that crosses numerous municipal boundaries.

Ceasefire (continued from page 1)

The implementation of this initiative here is community organizing at its best! Often I am asked, "What is community organizing? What do you do?" "Ceasefire" provides a great example.

In July of 2011, ISAAC conducted a "porch patrol" going door to door through neighborhoods of Kalamazoo asking residents to identify key areas of concern. What we consistently heard were comments about youth violence and drugs. ISAAC discussed *what we might do to address this identified community concern. We did a search of what seemed to be working elsewhere. We came across the initiative called "Ceasefire," spearheaded by David Kennedy. We contacted him and he agreed to be the keynoter at our 2012 banquet in March. His talk mobilized civic and community leaders to action. We continued to build the community partnership needed to implement "Ceasefire." Then, at the ISAAC Public Meeting in October, Chief Hadley and Rev. Dr. Scott made public their commitment to each do their part for "Ceasefire," and Chief Hadley committed as much as \$250,000 per year to fund it! This is what community organizing is.*

Join us! Your donations make our work possible.

Housing (continued from page 1)

The Promise & Chamber committed to "be partners in the work to create a win-win situation for our community—by spreading the word that the whole community benefits from providing affordable places to call home, and by helping to find increased, ongoing funding for ending homelessness."

KRESA and all eleven superintendents of school districts in Kalamazoo County had already made their support public last January. This is how we will end homelessness in our county! Your support makes it possible!

Education (continued from page 1)

off at the corner? This car is kind of old. I'll walk the rest of the way." Finally the 25-year-old said, "You were right! I hear my parents' voices in my mind!" A parent mimed the challenges of responding well to each child's different developmental level.



Leaders from the Great Start Collaborative, KRESA, and Trenches Church were all there to respond to the question whether they would commit to increasing Kalamazoo families' access to parenting education that is "appropriate, appealing, positive and evidence-based." They all answered with an enthusiastic "Yes."

A strong community is our greatest asset.

We believe communities are built on the goodwill and energy of the people who belong to them. That's why we're proud to support ISAAC's pursuit of advocacy and social justice.

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Why Donate to ISAAC?

I am an ISAAC Donor because Jesus tells us in Luke 10:27 to "Love thy neighbor as thyself". As children of God, we are our Brother's keeper. Advocating for Social Justice is one way we express our love for God. The work of ISAAC reflects the power of the Church to further Social Justice! Monetary contributions are earthly tools that transform that work into a reality! *John Davis, Mount Zion Baptist*



As a professional in the aging network and as wife of our county Sheriff, I see the need for people to give of their time, talent and treasures to assist others so we can live in a safe

and just community. ISAAC has dedicated staff, partners and volunteers to move Kalamazoo toward becoming that kind of city and I am proud to be a donor to this organization. As Desmond Tutu said, "If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor". *Lisa Fuller*

I am so impressed by the passion and commitment that ISAAC organizers and volunteers have for improving our community. I also highly value the diversity of the coalition of community groups active in ISAAC. *Amy Damashek, Temple B'nai Israel*



I support ISAAC because ISAAC is working to improve life for all people. ISAAC does not just talk about what needs to be changed or how bad things are, ISAAC puts boots on the ground to bring about changes on all levels for all people. Way to go ISAAC!

Pastor Rick Tyson, From the Bible Church

"I feel lucky to live in greater Kalamazoo. We are fortunate in many ways to have great arts, education, businesses and people. I like that we have a strong sense of community, hard work, and fairness. I feel strongly that we need to insure that the benefits of our community are available to all. ISAAC is essential to making this happen." *Jim Rojeski*



For where your treasure is,



there your heart will be also. **Be a GEM** Matt 6:21

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President's Message *(continued from page #)*

I and the leaders of ISAAC, ask each of you that love your community and the vital issues that we are addressing, to partner with us by contributing financially to this critical work of Social Justice. Your invaluable contributions to date, have allowed us the opportunity to have an impact in many life changing endeavors. With your continued support, we believe we can accomplish so much more. Psalm 30:5b states: "Weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning (NASB)". The night is ending, and we now have a reason to shout a joyful sound of victory. The dark clouds of frustration and despair are fading, and the light of hope is beginning to shine. We **must** continue to go forth, marching toward abundance for all God's children. Embracing the Journey,

Elder Douglas King, ISAAC President

THANK YOU to our funders!











The 500+ people at the ISAAC 2012 Public Meeting jumped to their feet for a standing ovation when Chief Jeff Hadley announced he supports 'Ceasefire' "100%. Absolutely." (See page 1)

