



ISAAC – DOING JUSTICE

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

September 2012



ISAAC
10th Anniversary

**2012
Public
Meeting**

**GOD'S
ABUNDANCE
FOR ALL**

**God's abundance & equal opportunity
for all God's children**

EDUCATION ♦ HOUSING ♦ TRANSIT ♦ YOUTH

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11

6:00 pm Doors Open 7:00 pm Program

at Galilee Baptist Church

1216 North Westnedge Avenue

Come, join hundreds of others!

Together, we make a difference!

ISAAC is an interfaith organizing network of congregations & strategic partners
working together to build a more just community

412 East Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49007
isaackalamazoo.org 269-341-4213

10-11-12!

...SEVEN, EIGHT, NINE, **10-11-12!**
**IT'S TIME FOR THE ISAAC PUBLIC
MEETING!!**

We are putting "feet to our faith", and moving from talking to walking. We are calling all of Kalamazoo and our surrounding families, to meet us at Galilee Baptist Church on October 11, 2012 at 7pm (doors open at 6pm), to celebrate our task force victories and commit to a new course of responsibility and action. Our powerful Task Forces on **Education & Early Childhood, Transportation, Affordable Housing, Youth Violence & Drug Prevention**, will present their plan of action to the community. Come out and witness the exciting direction that both ISAAC and our community are taking. We welcome you to be a part of ISAAC working together with other key leaders to bridge the

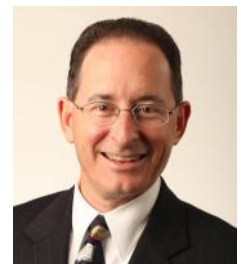


Elder Doug King

(Continued on page 2)

KPS Superintendent thanks ISAAC

"I am writing to share...deep appreciation for ISAAC's role in our state legislative lobbying on school funding," Kalamazoo Public School Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice wrote to ISAAC in July.



Dr. Michael Rice

"The joint lobbying was successful in the continuation of the district's \$1.7 million class size reduction grant, a grant that permits lower class sizes in grades kindergarten through third grade at our poorest elementary schools," Dr. Rice continues.

"As a result of this focused lobbying, we will be able to maintain 17 [children] to 1 [teacher] K-3 class sizes at Lincoln International Studies School, Edison Environmental Science Academy,

(Continued on page 2)

Voter Registration—spread the facts!

IN OUR WORK TO REGISTER VOTERS this summer, we have found that some of the facts about voter registration are often misunderstood. Please help spread this word:

- ♦ **October 9 is the last day to register to vote** to be able to vote on November 6.
- ♦ **People CAN vote in Michigan if they have served time in prison.** The laws vary on this, state to state, so many people think they cannot vote. In our state they CAN vote!
- ♦ **People with no state-issued ID and no Social Security number MAY register to vote.** They just need to be US citizens and 18 years or older, like all other voters. The state will issue them a voter registration ID number.
- ♦ **People who are homeless MAY register to vote.** The registration form has a space for people to give a different

(Cont'd on page 2)



10-11-12! (continued from page 1)

many political, social, economic and spiritual injustices that divide us. Let us take a stand on the power of the critical things that unite us. We are extremely excited about imminent changes that are certain to occur if we come together, roll up our sleeves and commit to what God has called us each to do.

What's one reason we're excited? Come out to hear how Chief Jeff Hadley and the Department of Public Safety are committing and collaborating with ISAAC, clergy and other community members to bring exciting and proven strategies to help prevent gun violence in our neighborhoods. This is just one of the many reasons for our exuberance.

Kalamazoo, WE ARE WORTH THE FIGHT! We are called for such a time as this! ISAAC is determined that there should and will be GOD'S ABUNDANCE FOR ALL! Please join us at this exciting event.

Voter Registration (continued from page 1)

mailing address from the place where they stay.

- ◆ Young people **MAY** register to vote when they are still 17 if they will turn 18 by November 6.
- ◆ People who have moved since the last time they voted need to register at their **NEW ADDRESS**.

There's no need to re-register for people who live where they did last time they voted.

ISAAC is working with the NAACP and Michigan Citizens Action to register voters. **Please contact ISAAC Voter Registration Coordinator Jonathan Bartik, 806-1902, or a <jon.bartik@gmail.com> to set up a time and place to register voters at your congregation or event before October 9.**

Superintendent (continued from page 1)

Washington Writers Academy, Woodward School for Technology and Research, and Northeastern Elementary School, each of which has at least 90 percent of its students free or reduced-price lunch eligible. In addition, we will have the same class sizes in grades K-1 at Woods Lake Elementary: at Magnet Center for Arts and at Spring Valley Center for Exploration.”

Dr. Rice specifically thanked Brendan Flanagan, Tobi Hanna-Davies, LaShana Jones, and the ISAAC Education Task Force, but these thanks belong to everyone who contacted our state legislators this spring about the class size reduction grant. **ISAAC leaders, and partners we mobilized across the state made over 600 phone calls to state legislators on this issue, plus four visits to Lansing!**

“Kalamazoo Public Schools children benefited from your advocacy, Dr. Rice concludes. “On behalf of the Board of Education, thank you for your steadfastness in this important effort.”

Embracing the Journey,

Elder Douglas King, ISAAC President

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1640 Children Homeless!

We know what to do!

1640 SCHOOL CHILDREN, K-12, WERE HOMELESS IN KALAMAZOO COUNTY IN THE 2011-12 SCHOOL YEAR, by KRESA's count. That's enough children to FILL the main floor of Miller Auditorium and part of the balcony!

Meanwhile, research from cities across the US shows that communities SAVE money by helping people get a place to call home. Making housing affordable costs HALF as much as providing shelter! Hospitals, public safety departments, and schools in other cities have saved \$8,000-20,000 per year per homeless person by making housing affordable! Go to www.homescoalition.com and click on The Need – Cost of Homelessness for the HUD study done in Kalamazoo. Click on Best Practices - Research to see the remarkable savings other cities have seen.

ISAAC, with the other HOMES Coalition members, is seeking the partnership of local institutions that would save significant dollars if we end homelessness in our county. The Local Housing Assistance Fund, in partnership with other agencies, has shown how it can be done!

Transportation Forums across MI led by ISAAC Organizer

ISAAC Organizer Jeremy Orr has facilitated 16 community forums on Transportation this year, in cities all across Michigan. In late August, he led forums in the Upper Peninsula, in Escanaba and Marquette, and the forums got great coverage on the local ABC TV news. In September, the Kalamazoo community finally got to experience one of the TRANS4M (Transportation for Michigan) forums that Jeremy leads. And Kalamazoo had the largest attendance of all, with 60 attendees, beating out Ann Arbor, Flint, Jackson, and Detroit.



Jeremy Orr

“What transportation **investments** would you like to see in **your community?**” Participants got to answer that question through a series of engaging exercises. There was lively discussion at each table, then each group's ideas were turned in to facilitators Jeremy Orr & Kathryn Gray. **The purpose of the forum is to generate input to Governor Rick Snyder and the Michigan Legislature as they create a shared transportation vision for the state.**

TRANS4M includes multiple partners. In Kalamazoo the forum was sponsored by the Kalamazoo Regional Chamber of Commerce, KCTA (Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority), Disability Network of SW Michigan, ISAAC, BlueGreen Alliance, the League of Women Voters Kalamazoo Area, Friends of Transit, Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers, and Kalamazoo Environmental Council. For more information go to www.trans4m.org

KC Ready 4s thanks ISAAC

“THE GOAL OF THE KALAMAZOO COUNTY READY 4s is to provide fully accessible, high quality pre-kindergarten to every 4-year old in Kalamazoo County so that every child can begin kindergarten ready to succeed,” says the KC Ready 4s brochure describing its “joyful, intentional, life-changing” program. KC Ready 4s began in 2011-12 with 65 children and 5 providers and will double each year until all 4-years-olds in the county have access, with the cost based on the ability to pay.

“How did this all start?” the brochure asks. “In **October 2008**, the **17 congregations of the Interfaith Strategy for Advocacy & Action in the Community (ISAAC)** identified high-quality early education as a key issue. As a result, in **January 2011**, the Kalamazoo County Ready 4s' board was formed and

funding for a two-year pilot program was secured through the Learning Network (Kellogg Foundation and Kalamazoo



Community Foundation), PNC, Dorothy U. Dalton Foundation, Gilmore Foundation and other local contributors.”

“Why is it important?” the brochure says. “Early childhood education works! ...A child who participates in a high quality pre-kindergarten program will: increase achievement levels at kindergarten entrance..., increase high school graduation rates..., and increase adult earnings...”

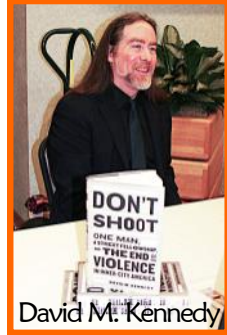
It was the ISAAC Early Childhood Education Task Force that had the vision to ask for a collaborative effort to increase the availability of high quality pre-kindergarten. Now up and running, KC Ready 4s is “built on a spirit of collaboration that includes the following partners: Heads Start, Great Start Readiness Programs,

private pre-kindergarten programs, Western Michigan University, Child Care Resources, W.E. Upjohn Institute and Great Start Collaborative.”



Sandy Standish

For more about KC Ready 4s, go to www.kcready4s.org or call the Executive Director, Sandy Standish, 366-9140. For ISAAC's next steps on Education, be there 10/11/12!



ISAAC 2012
 ← Banquet
 Eastside Spring Fling →
 Many more photos at
isaackalamazoo.org
 Events—Pictures



For where your treasure is,
 there your heart will be also. *Matt 6:21*

Be a GEM

Help Build a More Just Community!

Be a GEM
 (Give Every Month)
 or make a one-time donation

INVEST IN ISAAC
 by credit card, electronic funds transfer, check or cash

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Undersheriff Paul Matyas, County Commissioner Carolyn Alford, Sheriff Rick Fuller

Thanks to St. Martin of Tours Episcopal Church & Jenny Dantes, Parish Administrator, for the design of ISAAC—Doing Justice.