

ISAAC — DOING JUSTICE

An interfaith organizing network of congregations and strategic partners working together to build a more just community Sept 2009

President's Message

UGUST 13, 2009 WAS A HISTORIC MOMENT in Kalamazoo as the citizens of the Northside, Edison and Eastside came together downtown to take action on issues that face our community.

ISAAC was the bridge that con-



nected people—youth and elderly, people from many traditions—in this process of reclaiming our neighborhoods.

Kalamazoo County will become a more just community by the actions of individuals that reside in our community. Therefore, ISAAC initiated a campaign to identify individuals that are G.E.M.s in our community.

What's a G.E.M.?



- Someone who Gives Every Month to invest in ISAAC.
- Someone who commits to give whatever they can on a monthly basis.

ISAAC is looking for 50 new G.E.M.s to continue to rewrite history in Kalamazoo. ISAAC needs you to be a G.E.M.! See page 3.

Overseer Daniel Cunningham President of ISAAC

Tina Burch's Story The impact of statesupported preschool



Tina Burch with her family, DeVanne II, De'Jah, both 7, Kristina, 13, and DeVanne Burch, Sr.

INVOLVED, MORE CAR-ING PARENT. I have two children who went through the PEEP program, my daughters, who are now 7 and 13. I learned to make every moment a teachable moment. If I'm cooking, I have them help me cook. If I'm reading the paper, that makes them want to read. Instead of yelling, I know it's better to talk to them calmly. If PEEP helped me be a more involved and caring parent, think how many others they've changed!

I'm part of the Great Start Collaborative Parent Coalition. When they told us about the state cuts to PEEP, I became personally enraged. There are so many other things we can do besides cuts on our children! A luxury tax, a tax on cigarettes,

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*PEEP (Pre-kindergarten Early Education Program) is the Kalamazoo Public Schools state-supported preschool.

Unity for Justice:

ISAAC 2009

Covenant Celebration!

New congregations and organizations join ISAAC!
New & current members commit to work together to build a more just community

Thurs, Oct 29 6:30 Doors open 7:00 Program begins

at **Tabernacle**Church of God in Christ

3210 Virginia Ave. Kalamazoo 49004

→ From downtown, go north on Riverview, turn right on Mt. Olivet, turn left on Virginia

Review: Our History
Revive: Our Faith
Remember: Those who
have gone before us
Renew: Our Commitment
Reclaim: Our Community!

COME!

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August 13 Victories

at the Eastside, Northside & Edison Combined Neighborhood **Public Meeting**

In July, 100 ISAAC Porch Patrol volunteers knocked on doors to listen to residents talk about their neighborhood concerns. Next, task forces met with community leaders to find solutions. Then, community leaders made public commitments to the solutions below at the Aug 13 Public Meeting. As you read this list, please consider making a contribution to sustain this work.

- WMU & KVCC will develop mentoring courses for their students so they receive credit for being a Big Brother or Big Sister.
- Kalamazoo Parks & Recreation will facilitate teen-led planning of new youth activities for our neighborhoods.
- · City of Kalamazoo will improve lighting by making repairs and trimming trees.
- City of Kalamazoo will demolish abandoned houses prioritized by residents.
- Residents will participate in the Citizen Police Academy and Kalamazoo Public Safety will plan anti-racism training for their staff.
- · Plans to build an Eastside Recreation Center by 2014 continue.

Throughout this process, new leaders emerged from neighborhoods and congregations—all excited to reclaim our communities as holy ground. This powerful work was accomplished by leaders volunteering their time and talents. We need you to join with us.

Please consider becoming a G.E.M.!



Save the Date! Sat, March 20, 2010 **ISAAC Banquet**

Tina Burch's Story from page 1

beer, paying extra to go to a ballgame or a fair or to get your nails done—I'd rather do cut If PEEP helped that than me be a more programs for kids.

I decided to go involved and to my pastor, Dr. caring part think how caring parent, Addis Moore, and I many others explained the cuts they've to him. I asked if changed! Mount Zion could sponsor a bus to Lansing to talk to our legislators. They need someone talking to them about all the families that can't afford preschool!

I set up a table at church, and talked with church members as they were coming by. Another member and I had a sign-up sheet and asked people to go to Lansing. Surprisingly, we got quite a few.

Twenty-three people from Mt. Zion, ISAAC, United Way and Great Start Collaborative went on the first trip on August 13, with Mount Zion donating the bus. We had at least a hundred letters from church members to give to our legislators.

On the second trip a Gazette writer and photographer went with us. We had about If they cut 60 more letters. funding for We got to talk to PEEP, they're taking a step **Senator Tom** backwards! George and Representative Larry DeShazor. They sympathized, but didn't promise.

If they cut funding for PEEP, they're taking a step backwards! Somebody has to be there to speak for the kids. Kids don't have a voice. Someone has to speak up!"

ISAAC has collected hundreds of letters from church members and partnered with the Great Start Collaborative, Greater Kalamazoo United Way and others to organize multiple trips to Lansing, a prayer vigil and a phone campaign to our legislators Governor.

You may not have been able to join us in going to Lansing. But that doesn't mean you don't value children! You can match your resources and your values by becoming a G.E.M. Your monthly contribution support our efforts to give every child in our county the education that will lead

What else you can do: Call these four legislators' offices once a week until Oct 1. One of their aides will take your message.

to a bright future

What you can say: "I want Senator... or Representative... to oppose budget cuts to preschool." You can tell your own story about why this issue matters to you.

Legislators to call:

Sen Mike Bishop, Senate Majority Leader, 877-924-7467 Rep Andy Dillon, Speaker of the House, 888-737-3455 Sen Ron Jelinek 866-305-2121 Rep George Cushingberry

One of the many trips to Lansing to support preschool funding. Wayne County delegates join ISAAC delegates, Tobi Hanna-Davies, Beth Myers, Rev. Carol Richardson, and Demarra Gardner.

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Be a G.C.M.!!



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

If you treasure social justice, Give Every Month to invest in ISAAC as we work together with congregations and strategic partners to build a more just community!

Monthly Amount	GEM Investment Level
\$5-24	Emerald
\$25-49	Ruby
\$50-100+	Diamond

Use the enclosed envelope

or contact ISAAC to invest by Visa or MasterCard, electronic funds transfer, check or cash

269-341-4213 isaac@isaackalamazoo.org

If you are already a G.E.M., can you increase your investment?

ISAAC asked these G.E.M.s... Why are you a G.E.M.?

"I would hate to risk forgetting something as important to my community ISAAC. **Automatic** monthly giving makes it easy to put my money where my faith is!"



Suzanne Coleman. Christian Church-Disciples of Christ

THANK YOU

to our major funders

for investing in ISAAC!

I believe in ISAAC! ISAAC has given me so much-what want future to be for my kids and grandkids.

Brenda Stubbs Galilee Baptist Church

Unless I "program my giving", other

demands suffocate the good that my

Rev. Don De Young Bethel Reformed Church

I give because know how my gift will be added to others so that the important work of ISAAC can be accomplished.

Al Dixon St. Barnabas Episcopal Church

I've been associated with ISAAC almost from its birthing and truly believe in its

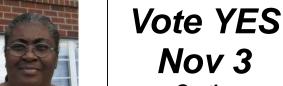
approach to justice organizing. and That is why I have personally chosen to financially support This and only this is what God asks of us: "To act

justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with God." Micah 6:8

Dcn. joe schmitt Catholic Diocese of Kalamazoo

Arcus Foundation gay & lesbian fund





On the City of Kalamazoo **Public Transit** Millage



Your Yes Vote Secures Transit WITHOUT Higher Property Taxes

Since Kalamazoo County property owners now pay 0.4 mill, City of Kalamazoo property owners are being asked to pay only 0.6 mill, for a total of just 1.0 mill for the next three years. That's LESS THAN the 2007-08 millage!

www.publictransitnow.com

Another reason to support ISAAC's work for social justice! Be a G.E.M.!

ISAAC

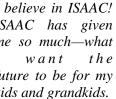
Interfaith Strategy for Advocacy & Action in the Community

Gamaliel Foundation Affiliate

Arcus Depot 412 East Michigan Ave. Kalamazoo, MI 49007-3888 (269) 341-4213 Fax: (269) 341-4218

isaac@isaackalamazoo.org





wife and I can do through the justice agenda of ISAAC. I believe ISAAC is

the "walk side" of the Church's "talk side". (Affirming

the importance of both!)

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Victories for the Eastside, Northside & Edison Neighborhoods



mentors Chet Hart



Bertha White



Shay Cobb



New Mentoring Partnership Jason Ford & **Desmond Wells** with Dr. Katharine Cummings, WMU



Commissioner Sean McCann





Police/Community Relations **Partnership** Rose McKenney, Janice Campbell, Commissioner Jack Urban, Pat Sanders



Jasmine Franklin



Lori Mercedes, Hispanic American Council & April Lee, Open Door COGIC





Listening Campaign Amy Peterson, CJ Jones ISAAC-Doing Justice 4:3 9/09 4

FORCH PATROL