

July 2025

THE BETHEL BEACON



FROM MANG SONNA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thank you so much for your recent financial donation and continued prayers for the Bethel Center. We are able to provide hope and help to our community all these years because of YOU, and other faithful supporters and partners. Together, we are making a big difference in the lives of inner-city children and youth, young families, individuals, and senior citizens in Kansas City! Thank you for the important role you play in touching and transforming lives in our city.



We are thrilled to have started a free medical clinic at Bethel Neighborhood Center. We partner with Better Together to open a free medical clinic once a month for uninsured patients, and the first day on June 12 went well. Several patients came for vaccination, a blood glucose check, and to consult with our physicians. We hope to open twice a month in the future, and we need more nurses, physicians, and volunteers to help us.

As funding for our programs and services becomes more competitive and hard to come by, we want you to know that we appreciate you and we count on you, your family and friends, your church, and organizations/foundations for future support. The impact of losing funding for our refugee program has been felt as we need to supplement our revenue to meet the increasing needs in our community. We are stronger and more effective when we don't have to spend too much time raising funds, but can focus on our programs and services. May God bless you and your loved ones for your generosity! Thank you.

VBS HIGHLIGHT: JUNE 9-12

Our theme, "Connecting the Dots," was brought to life with inspiration from Proverbs 3:6. We extend our gratitude to Pastor Janell Bloem and her team from FBC Boone, IA, who enriched our worship with their inspiring stories, art, and crafts. A heartfelt thanks to our VBS speakers - Pastor Larry and Pastor Jaime Velasques, dedicated staff, and volunteers who worked tirelessly alongside them.

We were blessed with thought-provoking teachings from Pastor Larry and Pastor Jaime, who emphasized the connections between freedom, faith, life, and work. A special thank you goes out to Grace Baptist Church and Metropolitan Southern Baptist Church for providing delicious meals and snacks for everyone involved.

With over 50 students, primarily aged 6 to 10, and enthusiastic youth participants, the week was a blessing focused on planting the seeds of the Gospel within our students and the community. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported this program. Volunteers from various churches and states came together, delighting students with a variety of new activities and faces as they learned about God. Enjoy a few pictures capturing these joyful moments below.



SUMMER HAS OFFICIALLY ARRIVED AT BETHEL-BY HAU LEIVANG, PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Bethel's Summer Youth Enrichment Program, one of the highlights of the year, has been in full swing since June 16th, following the successful completion of a four-day VBS. We have 100 students enrolled this summer, supported by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers. A significant highlight of our program is the presence of new faces among both our staff and students. Students are organized into groups based on their academic grades and are either dropped off by their parents or picked up by Bethel at 10:30 in the morning, returning home at 4 PM. We offer a wide range of engaging activities, including recreational pursuits, arts and crafts, reading, and health and life skills classes for our elementary students. Meanwhile, high schoolers participate in college preparatory trips and team-building activities, and middle schoolers enjoy recreational activities, arts and crafts, and lessons on healthy lifestyles. Another key feature of our summer program is the return of Conflict Resolution classes, led by a number of staff from the Center for Conflict Study. So far, students have visited the Kansas City Kansas Technical Education Center, Kaleidoscope, and the Hallmark Visitor Center, and they've even attended a Royals game. With three weeks left in the program, stay tuned for more updates on the impacts our Summer Program has made.

To Donate or learn more about us...

Bethel Neighborhood Center



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Kansas City, KS 66101
www.bethelcenter.org
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JUNE FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

In June, it became even more evident that there has been an increasing need due to food insecurity in our community. Our Food Pantry served 61 new families. We supported a total of 366 households, nourishing 1126 adults, 169 seniors, 1096 children, and provided diapers to 194 infants. We also served nearly 415 meals on-site through our community meals, Summer Youth Enrichment Program, and other ministries.

We are happy to report that we were able to access much-needed fresh meats, eggs, and other food items thanks to the coalition between *Feeding America* and our local *Harvesters*. We are very grateful for all of the generous supporters and partners like *Kanbe's Market*, *Urban Produce Push*, *Harvesters*, and several local churches. Their support continues to help us restock our shelves.

The community needs continue to surge. If you'd like to help with a Food Donation, Diaper Donation, Food Drive, Diaper Drive, or make a donation of other much-needed items, please get in touch with us for a list of needed supplies.

PRAISE & PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise God for a successful VBS - volunteers who came from FBC of Boone, Iowa, Pastor Larry Dunn and Pastor Jaime Velasques for preaching messages on *Connecting the Dots*, and to local churches for providing meals.
- Praise God for the ongoing Summer Youth Enrichment Program. Our students and staff enjoy meeting new friends, participating in activities, and having fun-filled fieldtrips.
- Praise God for the Bethel board, staff, volunteers, donors/supporters, and the lives that are touched and transformed because of the Bethel ministry in Kansas City.
- Pray for the refugee families. Resources and jobs are now limited and difficult to find. Bethel continues to offer support where needed.
- Continue to pray for our students and staff and the Summer Youth Enrichment Program. May God grant us wisdom and safety as we minister to the youth and their family members.
- Pray for the success of the new FREE Medical Clinic of **Better Together** and **Bethel Center**.