

June 2025

THE BETHEL BEACON



FROM MANG SONNA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

My recent conversation with Oscar, a former Bethel youth, via Facebook Messenger, was a surprise and a great encouragement! Oscar participated in the Bethel youth program for many years along with his younger brother, and I have fond memories of them. He found me on Facebook and called me unexpectedly, and we enjoyed catching up with each other.

My conversation with him reminds me of the importance of the work we do at the Bethel Center, as he thanked Bethel for playing a very important role in shaping his life. Oscar is married, has a two-year-old daughter, and is working hard to provide the best life for his family.

The positive impact of Bethel on the life of Oscar and many other Bethel youth encourages me and my staff to work with many inner-city youth this summer. The theme for our Summer Youth Enrichment Program is “**Connecting the Dots,**” and we plan to **connect** and introduce them to positive lessons and experiences. Planning for the summer program is complete, and we are ready to have a memorable summer 2025! When I think of the positive impact we will have again this summer, I am thrilled, and I cannot wait to welcome them.

Thank you for your generous response to our summer appeal letter. Together, we are providing a safe and fun place for many at-risk children and youth to learn new things while feeling safe and having a wonderful time. Thank you for your generosity!

“So much love is shared here at Bethel, and we love coming here. Thank God for this place.”

Marcelo & Maria (New Seniors)

BETHEL GRADUATES ON THE MOVE HAU LEIVANG, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

We have concluded another successful season of our after-school program at Bethel. This journey was filled with laughter, learning, and a few minor bumps along the way as we played and grew together. One of the biggest highlights of this season is celebrating three high school graduates who are preparing to head off to college.

Allow me to introduce **Sergio Perez**. He first joined Bethel about 13 years ago as a kindergartener, enrolling in the 1st grade alongside one of his cousins. Sergio has been with us ever since. He is talented, driven, and deeply invested in his music career, as he poured into his band at Wyandotte High School, where he played the tuba. Now, he is off to Mississippi Valley State University, having received a music scholarship to pursue his passion for music, with aspirations of becoming a music conductor.

Next, we have **Arturo Delgado**, who has been part of Bethel since the 2nd grade. He excels in track and field and also plays football at Wyandotte High School. His consistency and commitment to our student program at Bethel have truly stood out. He gives back to Bethel, having been a volunteer with our elementary program and even organizing a food drive for our food pantry at his school. Arturo is heading to Avila University, where he will continue to play football on a scholarship. Additionally, he is a recipient of Bethel's College Fund scholarship this year.

Last, but surely not the least, is **Flor Orta**. She has been at Bethel since 1st grade, making her positive presence known with her vibrant personality. She has a great gift of leadership and a clear dedication to bettering herself. She is attending UMKC this fall on a scholarship and will be pursuing a degree in Computer Science. On top of these, Flor has been a volunteer and then a program staff member for the past couple of years at Bethel.

Our hope and prayer for Sergio, Arturo, and Flor is that they will become successful in their endeavors, always embodying character and a love for our community.

YARD SALE FUNDRAISER HITS THE MARK!



On May 16th and 17th, Bethel hosted a yard sale fundraiser to support the Bethel College Fund. We reached out to local churches and community partners for donated items, and the response was truly heartwarming. We collected a variety of donations, including furniture, office chairs, bedding, housewares, toys, clothing, and shoes.

Throughout both days, we experienced a steady flow of shoppers. Many took their time, carefully exploring each table and examining every item. Numerous touching moments occurred as individuals expressed joy in finding exactly what they needed at just the right price.

The support from our community deserves special mention. Many shoppers chose to pay more than the listed prices as a testament to their commitment to Bethel's mission. Additionally, we received many requests to organize more of such fundraising events in the future.

We are thrilled to announce that our yard sale generated \$2,000 in sales, which will directly benefit the College Fund. We are immensely grateful for the blessings we've received and thankful for His unwavering faithfulness.

To Donate or learn more about us...

Bethel Neighborhood Center



14 S 7th St
Kansas City, KS 66101

www.bethelcenter.org
913-371-8218



venmo

MAY FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

The school year came to an end in May. That, along with the increasing need due to food insecurity in our community, our Food Pantry has served more families per day in May than in past months. This month, we supported 380 households, nourishing 738 adults, 117 seniors, 675 children, and providing diapers to 142 infants. We also served nearly 310 meals on-site through our community meals and other ministries.

One highlight for May was when Wyandotte County Judge Tony Martinez, made a generous donation of 24 cases of Trial Size Tubes of Crest Toothpaste as well as other non-perishable pantry items.

We are very grateful for generous supporters and partners like Kanbee's Market, Urban Produce Push, Harvesters, and several local churches. Their support has helped to restock our shelves.

The community needs continue to surge. If you'd like to help, please get in touch with us for a list of needed supplies.

PRAISE & PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise God for the success of the Bethel Fundraiser Yard Sale and the support of our donors and Bethel friends.
- Praise God for the Kansas City Board of Public Utilities (KCKBPU) Employees Charity Golf Corp who generously donated \$10,000 to support our Bethel student program.
- 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 who entered the United States a few weeks/months before the suspension of the Refugee Resettlement Program. Resources and jobs are now limited and difficult to find.
- Pray for our students and staff as we begin the Summer with VBS, then transition into 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 **Better Together** and **Bethel Center** will open soon at the Bethel Center.