



August Update



Dear Bethel friends,

Our Summer Youth Enrichment Program this year was different from the other years, but our dedicated and creative staff made it fun, memorable and safe for our students. We intentionally made the classes smaller, wore face masks always, followed the CDC guidelines and tried our best to keep our students healthy and safe. Although we had Covid scares a couple of times during the summer program, none of our students got the virus from our Center. Reflecting on working with our students for several years now, Keith Kaduce, a staff member, said,

“We were able to overcome the challenges presented to us and the kids were able to express themselves through the projects we gave them... I was able to see the children maturing and focusing their energy as they have gotten older in the programs at Bethel.”



The 94 students who participated in our summer program expressed their gratitude for their participation and the backpacks (filled with school supplies) they received from several local churches. We are grateful to all the local churches that participated in helping our students, and you, for your recent financial donation. We are able to serve as the hands and feet of Christ in our community because of the help you have provided to us. Thank you very much for your generosity.

The second batch of our sewing students for this year, graduated in the third week of July. Since January 2020, more than 40 students graduated from Bethel Center. We feel very blessed to have partnered with **Once We Were Refugees** in providing this wonderful training to our refugees and immigrant population.



On the day of their graduation, our students brought their family members and food from their culture, and it truly was a celebration of their achievements. If you would like to know more about our sewing class, or want to volunteer, or help us in equipping our community members with this much needed skill, please feel free to contact Ms. Nem Sonna at nsonna@bethelcenter.org

As schools are reopening, we are getting ready to welcome our students soon. We are closely observing and following the safety measures our local schools, the health department and the CDC put forward to keep our students safe. The rise in Covid positives due to the Delta variant in our city makes us very nervous. Please do keep us in your prayer. We are expecting more than 90 students to come back in our after school program. If you would like to volunteer to help our students with their homework, please send an email to our program director, Ms. Elizabeth Vile at egregory@bethelcenter.org

May God bless you for your love and care for the poor and the marginalized!

Mang Sonna

Rev. Mang & Nem Sonna, Bethel Neighborhood Center.