



THE BETHEL BEACON

JANUARY 2024

NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...

Happy New Year! What a joy it is to welcome 2024 with a renewed sense of hope and excitement! My staff and I are excited by the new opportunities God has provided to us in the New Year. We believe that 2024 is going to be a year in which we will offer hope and transform many lives in our city.

We thank God for helping us to overcome many of our struggles last year. Although our new building was pretty much finished last September, we struggled to receive the Certificate of Occupancy until the second week of December. God is never late and provided it just on time for the Bethel Christmas Shop. We are grateful to God and our city officials for the Occupancy Certificate.

Last December, the Hall Family Foundation awarded us **\$100,000** contingent upon Bethel raising another **\$100,000** to pay off our construction loan. Please pray with us that God will supply our needs by the end of June, this year. Please feel free to share our need to match this generous grant with your family and friends. We look forward to partnering with you to impact lives in our community.



FOOD PANTRY

The need for emergency food assistance has increased in our community. Last year, we met the emergency food needs of 11,445 individuals by distributing more than 100,000 lbs of dry and canned food items and fresh produce. We also met the emergency diaper and baby food needs of 776 babies. Our commitment to provide culturally appropriate food to our community makes our food pantry ministry vital.

"Thank you for the sewing training you provided. I got a job recently in a company that makes uniforms because of the new skills I received at Bethel." Jenny.



THANK YOU FROM BIBIANA RUIZ, CHRISTMAS SHOP INCHARGE...

I was once a Bethel “Kid,” as were my siblings and cousins. Growing up our parent’s focus was our wellbeing/health and education. We couldn’t afford the luxury of gifts or writing a Christmas Wishlist in hopes that Santa would deliver. It was program like Bethel Christmas Shop that made our childhood much more like that of our peers. It was organizations and individuals like you who were our Santa and brought smiles to our home. I didn’t know that then, but I do now.

With the help we received from organizations, churches, businesses, and individuals, we helped 75 families, 97 children/youth, and 26 senior citizens. Bethel families, staff, and board members are grateful for your support and love. Without your generosity and willingness to adopt families, we would not be able to provide a Christmas to our community the way we did. THANK YOU so much for your generosity. May God bless you all!



PRAISE & PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise God for the Occupancy Certificate we received for the new building.
- Praise God for the New Year and the new opportunities God has given to us.
- Praise God for all our donors/supporters.
- Pray for Bethel board, staff, volunteers, and program participants.
- Pray for God’s supplying of \$100,000 before the end of June, this year.
- Pray for God’s continued use and blessing of the Bethel Neighborhood Center.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Our after school and summer programs last year impacted the lives of 127 students from grades 1-12. While homework help, social skills, and health education were our main focus for the elementary students, middle school group focused on educational hands-on projects, soccer, videography, and conflict management. High school students covered diverse topics such as fundamental banking concepts, college preparedness, school-related issues, and what to look for when buying a car for the first time. During the summer program, our high school students and staff visited three college campuses. It was an eye-opener to our students.

Our senior program continues to grow. Some of their favorite activities are playing Bingo, arts & craft projects, painting, exercise, and field trip. In closing, we want to express our deepest appreciation for your ongoing partnership. Our work is possible because of your commitment, and we eagerly anticipate keeping you informed about the incredible journey ahead in 2024!

