

B.R.E.A.D.

People of Faith, Building Power, To Do Justice



B.R.E.A.D. Newsletter

Jep Hostetler, Editor – 299-1961

May 2009

Nehemiah Action Gets Results

Boyce Safford, Ed Leonard, and Ron O'Brien reported to a delegation of BREAD leaders on Thursday, May 28th on actions taken to address the 85 worst of the worst. To date, enforcement actions have been taken on more than half of the properties. For example, the County Treasurer filed for tax foreclosure on twelve of the 85 properties on May 5th. Below are before and after pictures of the Mock Road Trailer Park—one of the 85 properties. The abandoned trailers on this property were removed within two weeks of the Nehemiah Action.



Before



After



On Monday, May 4th, **2,574 people** gathered to tell the *tale of two cities* and *witness to the vision of One City*.

“Our faith tells us that we were blessed in order that we might bless other people. This Nehemiah Action is an opportunity for us to get God’s house (our city) in order. This is not a Christian thing or a Jewish thing or a Muslim thing... this is a God thing. We understand who we are and whose we are. We understand that God wants there to be a brand new day at the end of the day and we are here to make it happen. This is a moment that God has given us to help get his house in order. This is a moment God has given us that we will not have again and we do not intend to mess it up.”

-Rev. Susan K. Smith, BREAD Co-President &
Pastor of Advent UCC

Nehemiah Action Highlights

Drug Court:

Judge Guy Reese reaffirmed his commitment to champion efforts to strengthen the Franklin County Drug Court and expand its capacity to 300 by 2011.

Healthcare

BREAD got commitments from federal legislators to support the applications for federal stimulus money to expand facilities for each of the three community health centers.

Vacant and Abandoned Housing

Boyce Safford, Columbus Development Director, committed to develop a plan to address the 85 worst of the worst properties and convene a task force to develop best practices to streamline the process for redeveloping abandoned housing.

One of the best practices highlighted at the meeting is the Genesee County Land Bank (Flint, Michigan) This Land Bank uses tax liens in



The 2009 Nehemiah Action was the thirteenth in the history of BREAD. The 2010 Nehemiah Meeting is scheduled for May 3rd.

“BREAD is the voice of the destitute of our community. Our Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Unitarian congregations represent many theological viewpoints, but what provides the central force that holds us together is our commitment to be that voice for those who are victims of injustices through abusive power at the expense of the oppressed. The fire of God’s passion burns against injustice and so must that passionate fire burn within us.

Bishop William Polley, BREAD Vice-President & Pastor, Zion Christian

creative ways to gain control of vacant buildings, generate income for rehabbing vacant properties, and increasing pressure on absentee owners.

Building Powerful Justice Ministry Networks

The 2009 Nehemiah Action was the largest meeting in the history of BREAD by more than 300 people. 87% of the people at the Nehemiah Action were brought by one of the Justice Ministry/Rodef Tzekek network members. Fifteen congregations brought more than 50% of their average worship attendance. Eleven congregations increased their turnout by twenty people or more. Those congregations will be recognized at the June 29th Celebration.

Advent UCC	Broad St. Presbyterian
Tifereth Israel	Columbus Mennonite
Christ UMC	First Congregational
First UU Church	Good Shepherd Baptist
Greater Faith AOH	New Albany Pres.
New Faith Baptist	St. Thomas More/Newman
St. John’s Episopal	Beth Tikvah
North UCC	Zion Christian Assembly
Olentangy CRC	

Justice Ministry Celebration/Investment Drive Kick-Off

Monday, June 29th at 7:00 p. m.-First Congregational Church, 444 E. Broad St.
440 people brought someone with them to the Nehemiah Action on May 4th. On Monday, June 30th, we will celebrate the growing Justice Ministry/Rodef Tzedek networks in our congregations and kick-off the 2009 Investment Drive.