A Church for All People – District Mission Center

Every Sunday a wonderfully diverse mix of God’s children gather for worship and fellowship at the United Methodist Church for All People, an inner-city church on the Southside of Columbus, Ohio. This inclusive body of Christ welcomes everyone; rich, poor, homeless, black, white, gay, straight. We gather as one extended family that authentically cares for each other and works for the transformation of the entire community.

Our vision is for a whole, healthy, and engaged community where All People are empowered to pursue their hopes, dreams, and aspirations; where lives are transformed by faith and trust, and personal fulfillment is experienced through the abundance of God’s love and grace.

In 2003, Church for All People created Community Development for All People (CD4AP), a non-profit entity formed with the mission of improving the quality of life for persons on the South Side of Columbus.

The outreach ministries and economic development activities of CD4AP reveal a “Divine Economy of Abundance”. According to this understanding of asset-based community development, God has ordered creation so that there is more than enough of every good gift. Positive transformation occurs in any community precisely to the degree that people invest the first and best portions of their God given resources to care for one another. Instead of focusing on the negative dimensions of what the community or individuals lack, the divine economy of abundance focuses on assets, inviting people to work together to achieve common goals.

Currently, Community Development and Church for All People offer a variety of direct services, many of which emerged from the dreams of people for health and wholeness, including:

United Methodist Free Store: The flagship ministry of CD4AP is the Free Store, which distributes over $2 million in gently used clothing and household items and serves over 25,000 individuals each year. The Free Store holds a Back to School drive each fall to distribute school supplies, and a Christmas Shop to help hundreds of families provide brand new toys, clothes and bikes as gifts for their children.

Affordable housing: CD4AP and our partner organizations have developed over $100 million in affordable housing to date. This includes single site homes, housing for ages 55+, and workforce housing connected to job training space. We also offer grants for homeowners in our target area to make exterior repairs to their homes.

Healthy Eating and Living (HEAL): CD4AP cares for the physical health of the community through our H.E.A.L. initiative, designed to accompany individuals as they set goals to improve their health. H.E.A.L. includes the All People’s Fresh Market, which is the largest site for free food distribution in Ohio and one of the top 20 sites in the nation. The market serves over 350 people per day. We have opened a similar market to serve the Linden neighborhood. H.E.A.L also provides health education classes, cooking classes, and exercise opportunities to the community.

Thrive To Five: Our goal is to ensure that every child born on the South Side is born full weight, full term, thrives to their first birthday, and arrives in kindergarten ready to learn. Working with our partner organizations, we offer education programs for pregnant mothers. We also host quarterly birthday parties celebrating every baby who has reached her/his first birthday, providing fun for babies and their older siblings, door prizes, diapers, and vendor tables with information on resources available in our community. In addition, we donate space in our building to provide a Mt. Carmel health station where pregnant women have access to an OB/GYN to get vital pre-natal care.

Youth Development: CD4AP serves hundreds of students each year through its youth development programming. During the school year, CD4AP provides a free after school program in partnership with the nearby Lincoln Park and Siebert Elementary Schools. In the summer, CD4AP provides a Children’s Defense Fund (CDF) Freedom Schools program. As part of these programs, CD4AP cultivates rich relationships with parents to engage families at all levels.

Job Training: CD4AP operates the Residences at Career Gateway (RCG) Training Center, which includes 2,400 square feet of on-site workforce and career-development training space, providing 1-on-1 coaching, job placement skills, and employer-driven courses to facilitate tenant employment with local employers. This initiative offers authentic workforce housing that provides extensive job training opportunities.

For more information contact:

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