

# NOTES FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

APRIL 2009

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>A WORD FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>THE UNCONDITIONAL LOVE OF THE CREATOR</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>RAINING RICE IN PHILLY</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PROPERTY UPDATES</b>	<b>3</b>

## UPCOMING DATES:

- We are looking for summer camp volunteers! If interested, contact Anita at [occcda@verizon.net](mailto:occcda@verizon.net)
- After School: OCMC, 2/1/09–6/4/09, 3:00–5:30pm (T–TH)
- Flea Market: 5/9/09 from 8-3pm @ 900 E. Howell Street
- Community Festival and Open House: 9/13/09 from 12-4 @ 900 E. Howell Street

## A WORD FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

*"I am going to send what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Luke 24:49*

Help is on the way. This is the promise that our resurrected Lord and Savior Jesus made to his now encouraged yet rather anxious disciples prior to his ascension. Jesus in essence was telling his disciples to remain in the city where the violence of the day had taken their master's life and could quite easily take theirs as well. Yet Jesus promise to them is clear and succinct. If you remain in the city, the help you desire, the help you need is on the way! In the context of these verses, the "help" is the promised coming of the Holy Spirit. The coming of the Holy Spirit would enable the disciples to be first transformed themselves and then holistically transform the world. Yet there would be a fifty day window of waiting, hoping and praying until the full measure of the Holy Spirit would arrive.

In 2009 at OCCDA, our step of faith to purchase our new property in January has felt like the disciples who were prayerfully holding onto the promise that "help is on the

way". Thanks be to our God help is arriving:

Volunteers from OCMC,

Neshaminy-Warwick Presbyterian and Philadelphia Bible College have been working with after school staff serving 15 community children.

A work team from Harrisonburg Mennonite Church made a huge impact in their one week stay in mid April. This is the first of many teams volunteering to remodel our new facility for OCCDA offices, OCMC sanctuary, and shared classrooms for ministries.

Legal aid donated by Bricker, Landis & Hunsberger for property closing and from Darin Steinberg (Duane Morris) and Oxford Circle Civic Association to help with the difficult hurdle of Philadelphia License and inspections.

OCCDA board continues to grow, mature and diversify with Kingdom-minded people from networks in and around Philadelphia. Also our interns for this next year are coming from: Lancaster, Philadelphia and Korea respectively through MCC and Goshen College.



Pastor Luke Weaver (Harrisonburg Mennonite), Dan Umstead (MCC Construction Service Wkr) and Bishop Leonard Dow (OCMC).

Mennonite Disaster Service donated a vehicle to the Kingdom Builder network of Anabaptist churches in Philadelphia that will assist our project as well as other ministries in the city.

OCMC and OCCDA recently invited prayer partners to join us as we pray and/or fast over our lunch hour every Wednesday for our programs, children in our ministries, property remodeling, fundraising, volunteers and work teams.

Your financial contributions, prayers and correspondence of support have been tremendous encouragement!

Help is indeed on the way! In the coming pages you will be invited to partner with us in a variety of ways as the Spirit moves at OCCDA. I personally invite you at this strategic time in our brief history to prayerfully consider where the Spirit is moving you, your congregation, and/or your organization to help!

~Bishop Leonard Dow

THE UNCONDITIONAL LOVE OF THE CREATOR

We have been having a great time in the after-school program this spring. Our scripture is Psalm 8, which describes David’s amazement that the creator of the universe cares and is invested in the human individual. Each week, we focus on one verse and have structured activities to help us digest and understand the scripture. We have created artistic masterpieces, visited the Franklin Institute to learn about the enormity of the universe, admired God’s vegetation and searched for insects and other life forms. We have done skits, been involved in intensely competitive games and helped beautify Philadelphia by planting an urban

garden. As we delve into Psalm 8, I have been reminded what motivates us in the after-school program. The god who is the king of the universe, the One who created our solar system and countless others, cares passionately about each human individual. He who sustains life on our planet, who feeds the animals and clothes the flowers, is deeply invested in each human life. In fact, as Psalm 8 says, He is mindful of us and cares for us. Thus, as imitators of God (Ephesians 5:1), we seek to care for each other and minister to the needs of those in our church and our community.

In addition, Psalms 8 reminds me of one of the central hopes of the after-school program. We pray that we will effectively impress upon the children the fact that they are intimately loved by their Heavenly Father. God has a special place in his heart for children and has ordained praise to come from their lips (Psalms 8:2). Thus, as we minister holistically to the children via homework tutoring, art, games, and field trips, we pray that the children will internalize the central message of the Psalm 8: the unconditional love that the Creator has for them.

~Leonard Thompson Jr.,  
After School Director



Hanging in the trees at Penny-pack Park.

“We pray that we will impress upon the children the fact that they are intimately loved by their Heavenly Father”

~ Leonard Thompson Jr.

RAINING RICE’ IN PHILLY

PHILADELPHIA — Mennonites are witnessing the “multiplication of loaves and fish” as they extend a hand to members and neighbors with limited incomes.

Congregations from Franconia and Eastern District conferences sent \$3,600 to Philadelphia churches for emergency food aid via Mennonite Central Committee’s Philadelphia program.

Ten Mennonite and Brethren in Christ pastors and leaders —Hispanic, African American, Indonesian and white — met to discuss ways to use the grant. The African American pastors reported that MCC grocery

bags are practical for their communities. But Hispanic and Asian leaders said their members would prefer 20-pound bags of rice, which actually cost less.

Mennonite Central Committee delivered grocery bags to Philadelphia, and members looked for the most economical way to buy rice. These “loaves and fish” began to multiply.

- When a Vietnamese Christian businesswoman, Julie Hang Tran, was asked where to buy rice in bulk, she responded with a generous contribution.
- Sister Laura Rogers at Crossroads Community

Center in North Philadelphia called Cousins Supermarket, owned by Palestinian Muslims, and they donated 1,000 pounds of rice.

- Pastor Aldo Siahaan of Philadelphia Praise Center went to buy 800 pounds of rice from a Chinese wholesaler, and an employee bought 100 pounds to contribute.

Bishop Lawrence Chiles summed it up. “It’s raining rice!” he said.

~ J. Fred Kauffman,  
MCC East Coast



Members of Philadelphia’s Anabaptist congregations deliver bags of groceries at the new OCCDA facility (& MCC East Coast site). Participants include Nations Worship (Franconia Conf.), Arca de Salvacion (Lancaster Conf.), Oxford Circle Mennonite (Lancaster), Monte Carmelo (Brethren in Christ) and Koinonia Fellowship.

**PROPERTY UPDATES**

Construction has begun!!! Our first work crew arrived from Harrisonburg Mennonite Church mid-April and did an amazing job finishing demo and framing the sanctuary and pastors offices on the first floor. Zoning was approved on April 1 but we are still waiting on our second floor building permit.

Please keep us in prayer as we have encountered some roadblocks with building permits. We invite you to join us in committing to prayer and fasting (as able) over lunch on Wednesdays. We are asking that God would continue to work as needed in the building process and through our continuing community programs as we have seen him work in the past! We know that "Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain." Psalms 127:1

Renovations are currently on schedule to be completed September 2009 with projected fit-out costs of between \$100-150,000 (including permits and furniture).

The timeline for renova-

tions and projected costs are as follows. Right now we are looking for volunteers beginning immediately! If volunteers are needed the task is ✓. If funding is still needed, the amount is \*.

**April 15 - 30—\$6500**

- ✓ Framing Walls and Stage
- ✓ Concrete Demo
- ✓ Concrete Re-pour

**May 2009 —\$39,350\***  
**5/1-15**

- ✓ Framing of Classrooms
- ✓ Installation of Bulkhead
- 5/15-30**
- ✓ Rough in Electric
- Rough in Plumbing
- Install Fire Dampers

**June 2009—\$7300\***

- 6/1-15**
- ✓ Drywall
- 6/15-30**
- ✓ Painting

**July 2009—\$70,125\***

- 7/1-15**
- ✓ Ceiling Grid
- Trim out Electrical and Plumbing
- ✓ Hang Doors
- ✓ Install Carpet and VCT
- 7/15-30**
- ✓ Install Kitchen Cabinets
- Install Movable Partitions



Work team demoing the sanctuary space.

**To volunteer:**

Contact Dan Umstead at dumstead@mcc.org or at (610) 574-2959.

**To contribute to renovation costs:**

Contact Anita Lyndaker-Studer at cccda@verizon.net or at (267) 265-1709 or send donations to: CCCDA PO Box 28340 Philadelphia, PA 19149

We would love to have you come out and visit as well!

~ Anita Lyndaker-Studer, Director

"Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain."

~ Psalms 127:1

Photos:

1) Surveying the potential for the sanctuary following demo attack

2) main entrance/reception area being demoed by work team from Harrisonburg Mennonite in VA



**OXFORD CIRCLE CHRISTIAN  
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*To extend  
healing and hope in the  
Oxford Circle community,  
believing that God's  
purpose of reconciling  
all people to Jesus  
leads us to minister  
on spiritual, physical,  
social & economic  
levels.*



**Check our website:  
[www.occcda.org](http://www.occcda.org)!**

**NOTES FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY**

**AFTER SCHOOL TRIP PHOTOS**



Fish stocking, fun in trees, and other adventures at Pennypack.

**BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS**

**Officers:**

President, Leonard Dow

Secretary, Jennifer Leaman

Karen Jantzi, Acting  
Secretary/Treasurer

**Members:**

Edward Dobeck

Janelle Junkin

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Bianca Lani Prunes

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