

# BETHEL NEW LIFE, INCORPORATED

## ***WE***

- Are rooted in faith; God calls us to be about the work of enabling the fullness of life for all and a healthy, sustainable community.
- Are faith-based, focusing on our West Side Chicago community. We work toward making this place a model of what can happen when people work together for the common good. We are a local organization with a national perspective.
- Are community directed. Most of our board members are rooted in the community; Bethel functions through major participation of residents on boards and committees and block clubs, participating churches, staff.
- Use an “asset-based” approach, building on the strengths and capacities of the people and the place, starting with what we have, with what people know and want. We turn liabilities (like brownfields) into opportunities for “smart growth” in an urban community context.
- Are holistic, understanding the connections between a decent place to live and a living-wage job for healthy families, and childcare, quality education, transportation, and access to healthcare for sustainability.
- Seek justice for all people, advocating and impacting systems so that there might be fairness, opportunity, and a future regardless of color, economic status, or nationality.
- Work in partnership with churches, corporations, government, and other groups toward a healthier, sustainable community.

## ***HISTORY***

The riots of the late 1960s and early 1970s left the West Garfield Park community in shambles. Homeowners, landlords, banks, businesses, and investors fled this West Side Chicago neighborhood. In their wake came poverty, unemployment, and despair.

But a small neighborhood church said no to despair and yes to life. Bethel Lutheran Church members, spurred by their faith, decided to fight the poverty and hopelessness. In 1979, they invested their few dollars to buy a three-flat apartment building and fix it up. In doing so, they gave birth to Bethel New Life.

Since 1979, Bethel has earned a national reputation for cutting-edge initiatives and pioneering approaches that build on the people, physical assets, and faith base of the community. Bethel strives to turn problems into possibilities through community efforts that arise out of commitment to self-help and self-determination with community-based, value-centered, solution-oriented initiatives.

## ***MISSION STATEMENT***

“If you put an end to oppression, to every gesture of contempt, and to every evil word; if you give food to the hungry and satisfy those who are in need, then the darkness around you will turn to the brightness of noon. And I will always guide you and satisfy you with good things. I will keep you strong and well. You will be like a garden that has plenty of water, like a spring of water that never goes dry. Your people will rebuild what has long been in ruins, building again on the old foundations. You will be known as the people who rebuilt the walls, who restored the ruined houses.”—Isaiah 58:9–12

## ***OUR PROGRAMS***

We have over 20 programs serving the West Side community and greater Chicago.

Bethel New Life is a place-based (West Garfield Park), faith-based community development corporation (CDC). Since 1979, we have developed initiatives that deal with the causes of problems in ways that build on the strengths of the people and community. This approach is known as asset-based community development and runs counter to the more common “needs-based” model of community development. Most basically, Bethel is outcome-oriented, striving for a healthier, sustainable community. Again, this approach runs counter to widespread process-oriented planning, which questions the details of the process more than corresponding effects and outcomes. All programs and initiatives at Bethel New Life, Inc., are conceived with sustainability in mind and must be

- Wanted by the community
- Financially viable
- Mission appropriate

Bethel’s programs could not have become what they are today without the help of our partners and collaborators.

## ***Cultural Arts***

Mission: A cultural home that encourages community pride through the arts; a place for passionate expression of our rich artistic heritage; and an alternative for youth to drugs and violence; a destination place

Notable accomplishments in FY 2004:

- Steppin’ Up: Journeys from the Soul Exhibition, sharing the community stories of courage and creativity, the journeys symbolized by shoes; developed in partnership with the Field Museum
- Developed a teacher’s curriculum and brochure for use with school classes
- Developed website and newsletter

- Out of the stories from the Steppin' Up Exhibition, in partnership with Community Productions, Inc., we produced a community drama, *Deep Enough to Swallow Me Whole*, with 62 community actors, six performances, and 637 people attending.
- Operated summer cultural arts program for 9- to 13-year-olds, and another group of youth worked with the Chicago Public Art Group and Gallery 37 to create a large mosaic on the front of Beth-Anne Place.
- Sponsored/ hosted the Deeply Rooted Dance Co. and the Black Harvest Blues Festival

Bethel Cultural Arts Center is located at 1140 N. Lamon on the Beth-Anne campus. For details and other events, call 773-378-3600.

*Northern Trust is very pleased to be a supporter of these efforts and looks forward to a more expansive relationship with Bethel. The organization's commitment to cultural awareness is a fine way to bring the local, diverse communities together and to provide another outlet for the youth and adults of the West Side and anticipate greater events, activities and programs in 2005 and beyond.*

—R. Sue Connolly, Senior Vice President and Group Credit Officer, Community Banking

### ***Employment***

Mission: Enable individuals to gain living-wage jobs, create new jobs in the community, and enhance individual asset development in the community

Employees: 6

People served: 1,600

Notable accomplishments in FY 2004:

- Employment Center served 1,600 people, placed 265 in full employment
- Smart Savers, a 12-week financial education course, taught 100 people, and 80 new individual development accounts (IDAs) were established. We received a three-year grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to help provide the matching funds for the accounts.
- Bethel's work with the formerly incarcerated provided 22 Welcome Home Internships, six- to eight-week work experiences with stipends to help hard-to-place formerly incarcerated people get into the workforce, have job references, and receive guidance about workplace deportment.
- Thanks to generous donors, Bethel provided ten high school youth with quality summer jobs at Bethel, learning the various aspects of community development and working in the programs.
- Prepared for move to the new Commercial Center at Lake and Pulaski and the consolidation of the Community Technology Center as a part of Employment Services

- Participated as partner in the LISC-funded Project Match approach to Employment Services and the data tracking results
- Completed the environmental cleanup of Bethel's two-acre industrial site in preparation for sale to a company to bring more jobs into the community

*Bethel New Life's neighborhood revitalization strategy is a national model of community development, and I commend and congratulate Bethel New Life, its staff and volunteers for 25 years of helping to make Chicago a better place to live, work and raise families.*

—Richard M. Daley, Mayor

### ***Housing and Economic Development***

Mission: Quality, affordable, energy-efficient housing, bias towards ownership, development without displacement, and transit-oriented housing and commercial development

Employees: 18

Families served: 345

Notable accomplishments in FY 2004:

- Built, sold, and closed on 12 single-family homes
- Predevelopment planning and work on new projects: Parkside Estates II—66 new condo units, Douglas Villa rehab and conversion to 24 affordable condos, and Keystone homes—seven new homes in partnership with Keystone Baptist Church
- Managed the construction process of the Lake Pulaski Smart Green Building at a transit stop
- Chosen by Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission to complete a community mapping program (Full Circle) for Austin and West Garfield in a two-and-a-half-year project
- Offered landlord/tenant trainings and homeownership workshops to over 200 individuals as part of a City Housing Resource Center contract
- Provided homeownership workshops and individual counseling to over 600 people
- Selected by Freddie Mac to be a major Chicago site for the “Dispel the Myths” pilot program, with monthly workshops for interested homebuyers in partnership with NHS and Money Management International
- Received a New Markets Tax Credit allocation of \$4 million from the U.S. Treasury for investment in real estate projects in the community

*Join us in congratulating Bethel New Life on 25 years of excellence. Since 1979, Bethel has been transforming lives and communities on the West Side of Chicago. Their many support programs and affordable housing initiatives have helped strengthen a historically underserved community within our great city.*

—Daniel J. Walsh, President, The Walsh Group

—David K. Hill, Chairman, Kimball Hill Homes

## ***Family Support***

Mission: Strengthening and supporting families

Employees: 60.5

People served: 3,386

Notable accomplishments in FY 2004:

- Increased Women, Infants, Children integration from 84 percent to 87 percent; Chicago Family Case Management at 91 percent
- Emergency Services provided assistance for food, fuel, security deposits, and healthcare to over 195 persons, thanks to funding from the Emergency Fund and the Owens Foundation.
- Molade Child Development program received accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Molade: 94 percent of children are developmentally on target for their age.
- Supportive Housing (transitioning formerly homeless families to permanent housing): 56 percent of formerly homeless families moved to permanent housing; 88 percent are employed.

*From the beginning, Bethel New Life has been a visionary catalyst for change. Bethel is a leader among community development corporations and is known for its community-directed, holistic approach to development.*

—Andrew Mooney, Senior Program Director, LISC/Chicago

## ***Seniors***

*I live with my daughter. I come here everyday. It's like brothers and sisters here. I'd be lost without my Bethel family.*

—Bertha Thompkins, age 80, participant in Bethel's Adult Day Services.

Mission: Seniors living to the fullness of life in community

Employees: 202

People Served: 727

- Bethel's Senior Services Division, currently the largest single initiative of BNL, came out of a twofold desire to serve the needs of our aging community and to develop jobs that provide opportunity for community residents. We have done both, creating over 250 new jobs in community-based services and serving over 700 seniors each year in our Continuum of Care.

- Independent Living Residences (3 HUD 202) are subsidized residences for seniors in the community, with over 185 units coordinated with the community initiatives.
- In-Home Care (Community Care) provides state-subsidized personal care in people's homes on the West Side of Chicago, enabling seniors to stay in the community.
- Adult Day Services provides transportation, meals, and full daycare (with nursing supervision) and activities for up to 60 seniors each day, enabling caregivers to work.
- Supportive Living Bethel's newest effort is piecing together 85 units of HUD 202 subsidized housing with a State of Illinois Supportive Living (modified assisted living) program to enable low-income elderly to stay in the community with assistance in daily living, meals, and residential facilities. The north wing of Beth-Anne Place is now fully operational, and has achieved 75 percent occupancy.

### *SPECIAL INITIATIVES*

- Many of our seniors' activities are located on the Beth-Anne Campus, a 9.2-acre site of a former 437-bed, seven-building complex that is now the Beth-Anne Foundation. The community campus enables new life for the area, for the participants, and includes the elderly housing and the above programs, administrative offices, a cultural arts center, Small Business Center, children's daycare, a medical center, and other services. This campus is a national model of adaptive re-use.
- Bethel has developed a career ladder for Senior Services employees, enabling people to start as in-home care workers, become certified nurse's aides, and connect with the City Colleges to become Licensed Practical Nurses.
- The campus enables us to do a lot of intergenerational activities between the seniors and the children on campus, bringing new life to all.
- We are also integrating the cultural arts with the seniors efforts, enabling seniors to participate in a variety of dramatic, poetry, and musical events.

### *Community Development*

Mission: Healthier, sustainable community through empowered people participating as citizens, building on community assets

Employees: 2

Notable accomplishments in FY 2004:

- Operated community technology center with 420 member users
- Have four VISTA volunteers working with various programs in asset development and financial literacy and leadership
- Became cosponsors and fiscal agent of the Al Raby School for Community and Environment, a small public high school that uses the community as part of the curriculum and trains students in organizing around issues and concern for the environment
- Area coordinating groups for West Garfield Park beats of Cease Fire, including the beat that had one of the highest reductions in homicides of the city
- Spearheaded advocacy around public schools (quality and closures), violence reduction, and city capital expenditures
- Spearheaded voter registration and voter turnout efforts
- Coordinated the ongoing work with the formerly incarcerated sponsoring the Winning Circle and liaison for reentry efforts

*What I learned from Bethel, I'm still learning today. It's how faith in community leads us to discover a whole that's bigger than the sum of its parts. Living and working and loving together in community, we discover a grace, a grace that's inside us, a grace that's between us, a grace that's bigger than all of us. Thank you all the people of Bethel New Life for making, and being in community.*

—Luther Snow, Asset Based Community Development Institute, former employee