

THE ASCENT™

sponsored by



Jacob's Ladder™

Community Development Corporation

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Come Up Higher...



*Come, Lord Jesus, Come, Lord Jesus.
In the hush of the trembling stillness,
So silent are Your gentle stirrings
On the scattered straw.*

*O Come, Lord Jesus, Come, Lord Jesus.
In this moment, scarcely can I breathe,
So sweet is Your breath born
In the stable of this poor heart.*

Even so, Come.

Dear Friends of Urban Faith-Based Ministry:

Sir Thomas Moore could not have put it more beautifully or succinctly. "The good things Lord, I pray for, give me the grace to labor for." Our theology calls for an ethical response to the needs in this world, not just for our children but for all. The fulfillment of the opening poem, "Even So, Come" by Lana Lee Marler and an artist's depiction of the newborn Christ Child are not only our hope, but the world's. If we pray for Christ's birth in our hearts, let us labor toward His birth in all children's hearts. In the center of the Belt Line is Boston Avenue, an important corridor for children traveling to and from Hanley Elementary School (600 students.) For years a critical mass of vacant, crumbling structures have combined with blight/criminal enterprise on Boston to render it the equivalent of an educational gauntlet. Educators label these circumstances "adverse learning conditions," negatively impacting a young child's ability to learn. (Ironically, the length of one football field away, sits prime, city of Memphis real estate: the Children's Museum, the Liberty Bowl Stadium, and the KROC Center.) Early in 2014, the Jacob's Ladder Board of Directors decided this intolerable situation had existed long enough. It was time to *build a team* with sufficient capacity to rid the area of blight and crime. Mayor A.C. Wharton, Jr., Public Works Director, Dwan L. Gilliom and others have joined that team to work toward the eventual transformation of Boston into a safe educational corridor for young children.

Pictured Right: On the north end of Boston, a gift from local business friend, Worlds Away, made possible the demolition of the first of several old structures in early February 2014.



Clearing the Blight at 311 Boston

KEEPING THE BALL ROLLING: May 1, 2014, Jacob's Ladder CDC co-sponsors the 7th Annual Belt Line Neighborhood Festival. Coca-Cola, Belt Line Civic Assn., Williams Temple COGIC, Mt. Pleasant Baptist, Lord of Life Lutheran, Christ Community Clinic and others combined for clean-up and blight abatement, while having fun with food, games and rides for neighborhood children.

ADDING ASSETS TO BOSTON AND THE BELT LINE: Jacob's Ladder volunteers and contractors continue building a *Community Resource Center* in the heart of the Belt Line. When complete, this facility will be the jewel of a campus, featuring a small children's park and several newly renovated houses. This multi-purpose neighborhood asset will focus on GED, computer literacy and work force development. Three previously vacant houses, too far gone to re-claim, were demolished to make room for the Center. Tangled thickets also had to go. One of the campus houses is already complete with a pictorial history posted on the back page of this newsletter. At least five different church groups played a role in its reclamation.

ROLLING THE BALL DOWNHILL: Jacob's Ladder owns a number of Boston Ave. lots which we have cleared and maintained as part of a blight/crime abatement strategy. This effort also provides local neighborhood employment.

ENGAGING CHILDREN: For the past five summers, Jacob's Ladder has run a very popular *swimming program* for children, 7-14 yrs., in collaboration with Christian Brothers University. Next summer we hope to expand the program using their very fine facility. In addition, we are working to add the sport of *golf*, as a collaborative effort with 1st Tee - an organization devoted exclusively to teaching a life skill to inner-city children. Promoting healthy summer-time activities and re-enforcing positive self image with life skills is a great way to spend the summer!

THANKSGIVING SERVICE - A finishing touch to a good year: Nine different churches and organizations contributed significantly to our Thanksgiving Celebration on Sat., Nov. 22nd - Jacob's Ladder, Belt Line Civic Association, Coca-Cola Refreshments, Annunciation Episcopal, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Williams Temple COGIC, Lord of Life Lutheran, Immanuel Lutheran Church and Collierville Baptist Church - each made a distinctive contribution through our clothing sale, Thanksgiving worship and the dinner following the service.

May the Peace of Christ Dwell in Your Hearts!
Rev. William D. Marler, Executive Director

To learn more about Jacob's Ladder Community Development Corporation, a 501(c)3 charity organization, go to our website jacobsladdercdc.org. We rely heavily on prayers, volunteers, and outside financial support. Please prayerfully consider becoming a regular contributor to this worthy inner-city ministry. All donations are tax deductible.

From CONDEMNED to RESURRECTED

The Story of 410 BOSTON STREET



BEFORE

FACT:
For every 100
Extremely
Low Income
(ELI) families
in Shelby
County, there
are only
17 available
low-cost
rental units.



BEFORE

CONDEMNED, ABANDONED AND NEGLECTED, THIS LITTLE HOUSE WAS RESURRECTED



Volunteers came from out of town to help.



Concrete-based HardiePlank Lap Siding installed over all new sheathing.



The last piece of HardiePlank



Inside and out, volunteers stripped the house to the studs, replaced rotten and termite-infested wood and then started rebuilding.

Can you swing a hammer
or wield a paint brush?

GET INVOLVED

Call (901) 338-7055
for
**VOLUNTEER
OPPORTUNITIES**



On the inside, new insulation & sheetrock were installed. Interior walls were finished and painted.

And here she is with all
new electrical,
plumbing, kitchen and
bathroom fixtures...
Ready for
two working class
lower-income families.



**410 Boston Street
on the
Educational Corridor**

A Ministry of

 **Jacob's Ladder
Community Development
Corporation**