

Tidings

A Monthly News Publication For Members And Friends

INSIDE:

- Straight From the Minister's Mouth
- TPCA Annual Auction
- Prayer Corner
- April New Members
- and Much More!

by Rod Everhart

Changing Lives



Some people have the joy of adopting children. Traders Point Christian Church is stepping out to adopt an African slum.

Lead Minister Aaron Brockett, along with Sheri El, Director of Benevolence, and Neil Troyer, Associate Minister of Worship, journeyed to Nairobi, Kenya, as part of a vision trip sponsored by Christian Missionary Fellowship (CMF) in September 2008. They went to witness the work of Community Health Evangelism (CHE) in the slums of the Mathare Valley in Nairobi.

"I saw a lot of people with a lot of faith, despite the poverty and challenges they were dealing with," Sheri recounts. "They had faith that God was going to take care of them." Sheri explained how she'd never seen so many people packed into such a small area – almost one million people in less than two square miles. The living conditions in Mathare are deplorable. Children walk barefoot, people live in tin houses with no windows, and the smell is "something you never get used to," referring to the lack of sanitation.

Yet Sheri saw signs of hope and faith. One example of this is the story of a drug-addicted prostitute who accepted Christ during one of the church meetings. With the help of CHE, she was able to get back on her feet and start her own small business.

During their stay, Aaron, Sheri, and Neil participated in a student assembly with children from a boarding school. During their prayer time, the Americans were praying in English while the children were praying in Swahili. "It was beautiful!" Sheri recalls.

The team was impressed by the work of CHE and Wallace and Mary Kamau. They, together with church partners, have started a community center where young people can go to get food, education, and spiritual nourishment. The hope is that they, in turn, will reach out to their own families.

CHE's main mission is to train people how to identify needs within their own community and then help these people to develop a strategy to solve their own problems. This includes not only physical needs such as food and medical care, but also spiritual needs.

"As people receive and get to know Christ, we then start growth groups," explained Mary Kamau during a recent TPCC Sunday worship service. "We then use them to plant churches."

CHE cannot accomplish its mission alone. CHE has begun linking churches to a particular village within the larger slum which the church can adopt and then perform its own missions outreach. So far, 20 churches have adopted ten villages.

TPCC has adopted the village of Bondeni, the poorest village in the slum – and the dirtiest. Here, all the refuse and runoff from the hills run into this area. Drug use and alcoholism are rampant because people have no hope or self esteem, says Mary Kamau. Despite these problems, TPCC believes it can make a difference. "In the past, we have been a part of *relief efforts* when it comes to meeting the needs of the poor," explains Brian Smith, who oversees TPCC Missions. "We now want to focus on *development* and more towards the growth of people and changing lives. This mission provides that opportunity. We're excited about teaching these people how to break the cycle of poverty through a holistic approach that meets not only the physical needs but also the spiritual needs of these people."

In September, another delegation from TPCC will travel to Nairobi to visit the Bondeni village. Meanwhile, the church can help by praying for the team that's going to Africa, the leaders of CHE, and for the people living in Bondeni. Pray that God will continue to open doors to meet people's needs, physically and spiritually, and that TPCC will have a big impact on the residents of Bondeni.

"There's a lot to be done," adds Sheri. "It's wonderful that we have the opportunity to help."



CHE Overview

TPCC missionaries have been talking about the effectiveness of Community Health Evangelism or CHE. On Tuesday, June 16, and Friday, June 19, from 6 to 9 p.m., TPCC will offer a CHE overview. Whether you are contemplating taking a mission trip this year or are just curious, everyone is welcome. To register or for additional information, contact Brian Smith at btsmith@tpcc.org.