



## BREAD Adds “Jobs” to Action Agenda

As the culmination of BREAD’s Annual Listening process, 500 leaders gathered for the Annual Assembly at Rhema Christian Center. After hearing compelling testimonies, attendees decided by popular vote to address the problem of "Jobs" in our community.

### **The Problem**

Over and over in our house meetings we heard that people throughout our community are struggling to find work. When people do find work, it is often for lower wages and fewer benefits.

### **Three groups of people stood out:**

- Young adults are the recession’s lost generation. In record numbers, they’re struggling to find work, living with mom and dad, and delaying marriage. Young adults are at a greater risk than anyone else of living in poverty. Today, nearly 1 in 5 lives in poverty.
- The unemployment rate for African Americans is higher than for white Americans. They tend to wait longer to find work, they are the last hired and they feel the impact of lay-offs first.
- Middle age workers with 20 to 30 years of work experience but not ready for retirement are being forced out of positions in favor of lower cost, younger workers. This is true for teachers, laborers, and middle managers.



### **The Situation**

Although unemployment in Columbus has improved slightly in the last six months, it is still more than 7%. Those who are working are not making much money.

A recent study by Columbus Research Partners shows that the mean hourly wage in Columbus is \$21.66 per hour. That wage, full-time at 40 hours a week, puts a family of three about \$5,000 below what the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Develop (HUD) considers as low-income. The bottom line is that too many people are unable to find work and when people do find work, they struggle to make ends meet.

Columbus also ranks at the bottom of the same study for the number of small business start-ups. Historically, we know that most new jobs are created through small businesses.

People need jobs to break out of the cycle of poverty, crime, hopelessness and depression. We can break the cycle of violence, but without a job it is hard to stay out of trouble. We can rehab houses, but without a job people can't afford the rent or mortgage. We can improve access to drug treatment, but without a job there is little reason to stay clean.

We will fight for jobs in our community.

**See details of the Research Kickoff on the next page.**



# Research Kickoff 2011

## Work for Justice - Join a Committee

Are you ready to get involved to help change our community? If so, plan to attend the research kick-off meeting on **Monday, December 12 from 7-9 pm at North Broadway United Methodist, 48 E. North Broadway 43214.** In addition to the research group for the new "jobs" problem, the committees for Crime and Violence, Healthcare, and Neighborhood Blight will meet to discuss plans for the coming year.

### Crime and Violence

**Goal:** Decrease the high rate of repeat criminal offending in Franklin County with better assessment, sentencing and diversion programs.

### Healthcare

**Goal:** Enroll Medicaid beneficiaries and uninsured adults with chronic conditions such as diabetes, in a coordinated care program at a federally qualified health center. This approach will save money and improve health conditions for the tens of thousands of chronically ill adults who currently rely on the ER for care.

### Neighborhood Blight

**Goal:** Implement an active Land Bank to take responsibility for more than 7,100 vacant and abandoned properties that are destroying the value of our neighborhoods.

### Reflection

Based on the lesson offered at the Annual Assembly by Apostle La Fayette Scales, Rhema Christian Center

**Abram** was called from his home and told to leave his country, family, father's house and go to a land the Lord would show him. One day, kings raid and invade *the community* and take all the goods, provisions and people captive.



### What kings have overrun our community?

- **Poverty** - lack of economic opportunity
- **Injustice** - lack of fair sentencing
- **Health care** - lack of services and access to healthcare

**Disturbing the comfortable** - Abram could have stayed in his comfort and distanced himself emotionally, intellectually and publicly because this was a *public problem* not his *personal concern*. Abram decided to get involved.

**Awareness** - Abram became aware of the community issues. *Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me.* Knowledge is power and arms us for the fight. However, knowledge without action does nothing.

**Confrontation** - Abram decided to confront the issues in the community. *Genesis 14:16 He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.*

What we will not confront we cannot change. Never complain about what we tolerate. Whatever we tolerate we permit to exist. Truth is confrontation.

## Sister Regina Marcum, OSF



Sr. Regina Marcum died on Thanksgiving Day. As one of the first Co-Presidents of BREAD, she provided spirited, fierce, tough-minded and warm-hearted leadership for the organization in its early years.

She taught me that "you can spend your time planning or fixing (making up for the lack of planning) and I would rather

spend my time planning." As I pause to recognize her passing, I also remember Jack Bush, Rev. Andrew Foster, and Rev. Hasani Stone among others as some of the saints of BREAD and soldiers in the work for justice. We have all inherited a tremendous work and are charged to be stewards of that inheritance so that we can pass it on to others.

Please join with me in giving thanks to God for her leadership, in commending her soul to heaven, and in offering compassion to her family. Thanks be to God for Sister Regina Marcum!

John Aeschbury

## Calendar Of Events

- ◆ **Monday, December 12 - RESEARCH KICK-OFF**  
North Broadway United Methodist, 48 E. North Broadway, 43212
- ◆ **Monday, April 16 - RALLY at 7 pm**  
Congregation Tifereth Israel, 1354 E. Broad St., 43205
- ◆ **Monday, May 7 - NEHEMIAH ACTION**