



October 11, 2023

***“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”
Micah 6:8***

Wow! Larry and I returned yesterday from our church’s mission trip to Cass Community Social Services (CCSS) in Detroit. In only two and a half days, we (fifteen of us) (re-)discovered how very much faith matters.

We witnessed the power of faith:

- in the incredible revitalization of downtown Detroit. God surely is at work in the people who led this return from the vacant lots, boarded-up businesses and deteriorating homes and churches that I knew first-hand when I attended Ecumenical Theological Seminary on Woodward Avenue (not far from the Fox Theater) in the 1990’s. Today it’s a vibrant, busy, safe residential and commercial area.
- in the vision and determination of Rev. Faith Fowler. Senior Pastor of Cass Community United Methodist Church where 40+ neighbors and homeless people including a growing number of children worship each week, Faith is also the co-founder and Executive Director of CCSS. You only need meet Faith briefly to witness her powerful faith, creative spirit and absolute devotion to dignity and equality for all of God’s people.
- in the depth and scope of CCSS’ programs in support of the immediate needs of Detroit’s most vulnerable people including the homeless, the poor, the hungry, the disabled, the unskilled and the unemployed. Twenty-nine years later, this non-profit is doing remarkable work in fulfillment of its mission to make “a profound difference in the lives of the diverse populations it serves by providing for basic needs, including affordable housing, promoting self-reliance and community involvement.”
- in the eagerness and devotion of our work team. We tackled staining two very large ramps, removed trim and repaired the plaster, assembled bunkbeds and sorted tons of donated books. All of the work except one ramp was done on the Fox Center – a former convent that is being renovated to provide individual rooms for

homeless women and their children as well as a library and community gathering spaces for meals, programs, studying, wellness activities and more.

- in the 25 architecturally unique tiny homes built by CCSS. It was a joy to see these well-kept homes where the occupants – some of whom were formerly homeless, all of whom have incomes less than \$14,000 a year – are flourishing. Soon, renters who've made timely payments for 7 years will become homeowners. What a sign of hope this amazing project is for the people, the neighborhood and the city.

- in the words of a resident of one of the several apartment buildings operated by CCSS. While staining the railing on the ramp to his building, this double-amputee opened the door and chatted with March Dye and me. I asked him, "How do you like living here?" He replied, "I don't like it – I love it!" Having a nice place to live where he can cook, wash his clothes and even watch TV put the huge smile on his face. Then, pointing toward heaven, he said, "I'm going to live here till I go home."

Faith in action is what CCSS is all about. It exemplifies what the Hebrew terms for justice, kindness and humility in the Micah quote mean. "Mishpat,' *justice*...is used to describe the fairness and equality that... should govern all social relationships. ...'hesed,' usually translated *kindness* (as here) or 'mercy,' is better translated 'loyalty' or 'integrity,' since the word describes fulfilling one's social obligations responsibly.... 'hatsnea' lekhet, "*to walk humbly*, describes a way of life directly opposed to the exploitation of power that Micah sees as the root of the corruption and injustice in his society." (*The Access Bible*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 1205.)

What a beautiful thing to see how CCSS is changing lives. What a privilege to experience how very much faith matters.

~Written by Rev. Margie Osborn

Click [HERE](#) to read previous "Faith Matters" articles



8190 Lincoln Rd. Beulah, MI 49617
231.882.4241
www.benziestandrews.com



[Unsubscribe media@benziestandrews.com](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by office@benziestandrews.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!