

Heartside Ministry 2009 Programs Report

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Heartside's programs divide into Advocacy, Enrichment and Pastoral Care. Each points the Neighbors to a deeper understanding of their value and invite a deeper relationship with God, the Giver, Sustainer and Redeemer of Life. We begin with meeting fundamental needs—*Advocacy* is the gate through which people enter our community and find that they are cared for at every level. *Enrichment* is where individuals freely explore and express their unique identity and intrinsic giftedness. *Pastoral Care* undergirds everything, seeking to engage and invite people into a life-changing encounter with the One who is able to heal their every wound, forgive their every sin, understand their every story and offer them the peace that passes understanding.



If—as is often true—direct advocacy is necessary, a call is made on behalf of the Neighbor. Staff work to clear up misunderstanding, cut through bureaucratic red tape or encourage reluctant service providers to work with their client. This intervention is designed to be constructive, supportive and empowering. It is also designed to help the Neighbors understand their options and the implications of choices, always coupled with general information sharing (i.e. if you accept help from such and such agency you may lose these other benefits).

Beyond personal advocacy, Heartside collaborates with other stakeholders to tackle systemic problems like economic development, inadequate access to health care or affordable housing. Heartside works to inform the public about the humanity of persons struggling with homelessness, mental illness, poverty and addiction through programs such as the Heartside Plunge or through inter-agency initiatives like the Vision to End Homelessness.

Counseling

Thanks to the generosity of several local agencies and individuals, free counseling with professional volunteers continues to be a very valuable resource for Neighbors who could not otherwise afford treatment. Nine hours of pro-bono counseling happen weekly. It's impossible to estimate how many Neighbors come to healing through the gift of wise counsel and a non-anxious presence that does not judge, but listens carefully.

Empowerment Groups

The Men's empowerment group is co-facilitated by a professional therapist and staff clergy, and has provided an arena for Neighbors to share their struggles & concerns and learn, from one another, strategies to cope & overcome the challenges of life.

The Women's empowerment groups has been on hiatus as it reorganizes to better meet the changing needs of the community. We are in conversation with local organizations to find where Heartside can best offer services to women in changing circumstances. The group expects to reconvene after the holidays.

ADVOCACY

Advocacy & Support Services

Empowering the Neighbors begins at our front door: they are greeted, their needs explored, information and resources are found to stabilize their situation. Staff advocacy counselors, often a BSW or MSW intern or volunteer, meet them in confidential sessions and help Neighbors set action steps tapping community resource to support their care and independence. Beyond referrals, direct aid is given for life sustaining meds or for birth certificates, state ID's, a mailing address, and to seek employment. The Neighbors are linked to every appropriate resource and helped in applying for services.

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Legal Assistance

Neighbors continue to enjoy free legal consultations from our dedicated volunteer attorney who helps steer them to community resources, answers questions and advises them on an array of issues. Seemingly insurmountable problems are made manageable when patiently explained and action plans help bring solutions within reach.

ENRICHMENT

Art

Heartside's art program is utterly unique. Every day, our main studio fills with up to 30 artists painting and drawing on every imaginable surface—canvas, lumber, cardboard, tin scrap, found objects, wood carvings, pottery, etc. In the back of the studio we have quilting, sewing, knitting and crocheting. Throughout the process, conversation and community building give a sense of place & of value. Talent is appreciated, work is admired, efforts are encouraged, people are able to express feelings deeper than words and a great affirmation of individual worth is silently offered up in the midst of the creative din. The Neighbor's art adorns the walls and is sold regularly at special shows, returning 90% to the artists and replenishing the supplies with the rest.

Pottery

The pottery studio has blossomed this year with volunteer leaders & teachers and artists who participate fully in the entire creative process: pugging raw clay, wedging, throwing, rolling, making hand & wheel thrown pieces, stacking, firing and glazing their work to exhibit and sell in the Heartside Art Gallery. Twice a week, the studio fills with up to 15 artists in freeing creativity.

Adult Education/GED

Eager students, 18 to 85 years old, crowd into our classroom and sit with volunteers, getting personal attention in lessons that range from basic literacy to GED prep. Dedicated interns and college volunteers have helped our staff tutor people one-on-one—with patience, persistence and praise. Smiles beam from the self-esteem that comes from mastering a subject. The gift of learning may be impossible to appreciate unless you see for yourself how happy and proud our students feel after doing their personal best.

PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care is central to every program, every method we employ for offering help: listening, guiding, affirming and challenging assumptions. *Our fundamental work is to help people experience God's Love for them.* It is transformational, it is effective, it is in answer to Jesus' command to love our neighbor as ourselves. It is given by every member of our staff, in the way that each Neighbor is esteemed and dignified, respected and invited into our Sacred Space. Pastoral Care happens with the proclamation of the Word of God every Sunday morning, every time we do bible study, every time we say morning prayers. It also happens through the counseling and support neighbors receive from our two pastors and our seminary intern to discuss the questions of faith that trouble them. It happens in our support groups as Neighbors affirm one another's strong faith with testimonials from their own life stories and it echoes in the meetings we host for AA, NA and Street Reach, where people lift one another up and testify to God's faithfulness with the stories of their lives. Our Pastoral Care programming is integrated with every program and forms the very core of our entire operation.

Worship

Central to the Ministry's life as community is weekly worship. Sunday mornings we gather for fellowship, worship and often community meals provided by partnering congregations. Fellowship starts Sunday at 9:30am, worship starts at 11:30am. Community meals are served now and then, immediately following service. Morning Prayer is also often a part of our spiritual discipline as well as seasonal observances throughout the church year and memorial services for the Heartside Neighbors who have passed on.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Clean Works: Monday & Thursday at 6:00-8:00pm

Street Reach: Monday & Wednesday at 10:00-11:30am

NA: Monday, Wednesday & Friday at 5:30pm

AA: Wednesday at 10:45am

HDNA: the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm

Hard Times Café: Wednesday at 5:00pm