

# Peacemaking/ Social Concerns



## OFFERING OF LETTERS

breadfortheworld 2010  
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

Once again it is the season for Bread for the World's Offering of Letters!

**Who is Bread for the World?** Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. By changing policies, programs, and conditions that allow hunger and poverty to persist, we provide help and opportunity far beyond the communities where we live.

**What is an Offering of Letters?** On one Sunday each year, church members and friends are invited by the Peacemaking Committee to sign letters to Congress on an issue that is important to hungry and poor people. Sunday, March 14, will be that day in 2010.

Bread for the World has a long history of working to expand the national nutrition programs like food stamps and the WIC program. But nutrition programs alone are not enough to help families overcome hunger. Low income families also need broader measures to reduce poverty and help them build financial stability. Current low income tax credits are falling short of their intent to help families meet their basic needs, with the result that millions of working families are struggling to put food on the table.

In 2010, tax policies will be debated as previous tax cuts enacted earlier this decade are due to expire. Congress will decide which ones to renew or change. The needs of low-income families and hungry children will be lost in this debate - unless Senators and Representatives hear from us. Therefore, Bread for the World's 2010 Offering of Letters will push for changes in the U.S. tax code that will benefit low-income families and help them lift themselves and their children out of hunger and poverty.

**Be prepared to help by signing letters to our Senators and US Representative on Sunday, March 14!**

## HUNGER IN AMERICA

(Washington Report to Presbyterians)

The newly released report, *Household Food Security in the United States, 2008*, reveals that hunger in America rose 3.5% from 2007 to 2008 - the largest one-year increase since the USDA initiated food security surveys in 1995. (And this was before the worst recession year of 2009!) Bread for the World says that: More than one in seven American households, suffered from food insecurity in 2008. Almost one in four children in our country lives on the brink of hunger. According to the USDA report, in 2008, 16.7 million children, or 22.5%, were food insecure - 4.2 million more than in 2007.



## WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT OUR FOOD BANKS!

March 7 will be Food Bank Sunday so bring even more staple foods to fill the food bank barrels in the breezeway. Or make a cash gift through the pink Food Bank envelopes in the pew rack or in the narthex of the Chapel for the early service. All food and cash gifts received during March will go to Valley View Community Food Bank in Youngtown.



## NEW LIFE CENTER

Once again the Peacemaking/Social Concerns Committee is providing information about one of the recipients of Faith's 25% of the 2009 Peacemaking Offering. This month we will tell you more about the New Life Center in Goodyear.

The New Life Center, a non-profit corporation, provides shelter, counseling, education, advocacy, and other services deemed appropriate for victims of domestic violence and their families. The organization promotes community awareness of the need for domestic violence services. The purpose of New Life Center is to provide a temporary, safe, caring environment in a shelter facility for victims of domestic violence and their children for up to 90 days. The shelter is staffed 24 hours a day, every day of the year by caring professionals and volunteers.

New Life Center began in 1991 in a small facility in Litchfield Park. It moved to a new facility in Goodyear in 2000 and now, with 104 beds, is one of the largest in the state. About 15,000 women have found refuge and a fresh start in life at the New Life Center since 1991. Breaking the cycle of violence is one of New Life Center's main focuses. The shelter expanded its staff and resources three years ago to better address children's needs and has recently opened a large childhood development center, complete with a nursery, computer lab, library, and playground equipment. Our Faith Church quilters make cuddle quilts and stuffed animals to give to children of women entering the program.

## IMMIGRATION CONFERENCE IN PHOENIX - APRIL 15-17

"Crossing Borders - Encountering God" is the theme of an event about Border and Immigration Issues to take place at the Phoenix Airport Hilton Hotel, Phoenix, Arizona, in April. The first day there will be speakers all the way from our PCUSA General Assembly Moderator Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow to the Moderator of the National Presbyterian Church in Mexico. The second day will bring many workshops. The conference is presented in partnership with the Synod of the Southwest, Synod of the Sun, The General Assembly Council Office for Multicultural Ministries. It is not possible to attend only parts of this conference due to space limitations. We hope some Faith folks can go for the entire conference and share their experiences with Faith members here.

*Submitted by: Ruth Mehl*



## MEET OUR NINTH HABITAT FAMILY

Eight people from Faith were in attendance at the wall raising ceremony of our ninth Habitat house. The event took place on February 6<sup>th</sup> in Glendale. Attending were: Debbie and Skip Young, Jan George, Phyllis Diamond, Joan Steele, David Green, David Van Arsdale, and Paul DeBeer. The West Valley Presbyterian Habitat Coalition is sponsoring the house with the East Side Presbytery Coalition, the N.E. Lutheran Coalition and the American Express Corporation.

The Clarke family mother, Cynthia, has two children, 20 year old daughter Tanya and 10 year old son Matthew. All three were present and introduced to the many in attendance. Cynthia expressed her tearful appreciation for the opportunity to own a home. She and her two children are currently living in a small one bedroom apartment. To make up for the lack of living space, both the dining room and living room have been converted into bedrooms. The family shares one closet and there are leaky sinks as well as damaged flooring in the kitchen. Due to safety concerns, Cindy does not allow Matthew to play outside in the neighborhood.

Cynthia is a single mother who currently works for a Elementary School District. She is very involved with her church and volunteers often. Her daughter Tanya graduated in the top 10% of her high school class and has received tuition assistance for her achievements. She is currently attending a community college and is majoring in business. Matthew is also an excellent student. His favorite subject is math and he is a fan of car racing, a sport enjoyed by the entire family.

Cynthia is looking forward to having a home where her children can have their own bedrooms and space to enjoy. They are a hard-working, positive family who contribute to the community through volunteering and various church activities. Cynthia and her family are extremely thankful to the sponsors for helping make their dream of owning a home come true.

*Submitted by: Paul DeBeer*



### Food Bank Donations for March

**Canned Soups and Vegetables**

**Please place your donations in the bins in Illingworth Hall. Thank you!**