

# Congregations & Early Childhood

*From the Early Childhood Faith Initiative, a collaboration between Durham's Partnership for Children & End Poverty Durham*

Year 2, Edition 1

August 2011

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### SECTION 1: FAITH COORDINATOR NEWS

HAPPY NEW YEAR in the life of faith education. Seems to be the beginning of yet another year for congregations as our life gets back to the usual routine versus the fun, hectic schedule of summer. Please let me know if there is anything I can do as you plan for your new year with birth to five. Don't forget to include them and their parents in your new year!

The Early Childhood Faith/Poverty Initiative is guided by a WONDERFUL committee that assists with this initiative of early childhood & congregations and reaching out to the underserved birth to 5 population in Durham. We want to expand the committee. We meet once a month and would love to have additional members. If interested, please let me know.

*Our next "Lunch & Learn" is planned for September and will focus on child abuse, the responsibility of those working with children to report suspected cases, and the challenge to do it in the faith community. More information will be e-mailed soon. Hope you will attend!*

**Contact me, Winnie Morgan at 732-1524 or at [winniewmorgan@juno.com](mailto:winniewmorgan@juno.com) to speak to your congregation or to help with planning for the fall for early childhood or to join our planning committee.**

### SECTION 2: RESOURCES & MATERIALS: Children's Sabbath

**Children's Sabbath** is a weekend (Oct. 14-16, 2011) to unite religious congregations of all faiths across the nation and Durham County to share a concern for children and a common commitment to improve their lives and to work for justice on their behalf. With almost 25% of Durham's young children living in poverty, we don't have time to waste or a child to waste. IF we get to them early and give them the basic needs of life as well as to teach their parents about early development, we can make a major difference in their future and in the future of Durham.

Use this weekend and your pulpit to share our concern for healthy early development of ALL children. Go to the Children's Defense Fund's Web site ([www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org)) and find materials on all religions: Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Native American traditions, Shintoism, Sikhism, & Unitarian. I am also willing to mail you information. **Contact Winnie for resources.**

### SECTION 3: QUOTES – Social Justice for Young Children

*Most people worry about their own bellies, and other people's souls, when we all ought to be worried about our own souls, and other people's bellies. ~ Rabbi Israel Salanter*

*When you pray, move your feet. ~ African proverb*

*If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot*

*on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.* **Archbishop Desmond Tutu**

*Today, it is fashionable to talk about the poor. Unfortunately, it is not fashionable to talk with them.* **Mother Teresa**

*Children are innocent and love justice, while most adults are wicked & prefer mercy.* **G.K. Chesterton**

*Justice is truth in action.* **Benjamin Disraeli**

*Justice is what love looks like in public.* **Cornel West**

*The church (congregation) exists for those outside of it.* **William Tyndale**

*One dollar up front prevents the spending of many dollars down the road.* **Marian Wright Edelman**

## **SECTION 4: SHARING IDEAS – Ideas for Children’s Sabbath**

The theme for Children’s Sabbath is: **“Justice, Justice Shall You Pursue: Answering God’s Call to Protect Children”**.

**Find a time to**

- Use all or some of your service focused on children (I have sermons, prayers, reflections, readings, notes on texts, etc.)
- Celebrate young children, parents, and those who work with them in your congregation
- Create a committee to address social justice/outreach for children in Durham
- Pray and put prayer into action for children
- Take action so young children in poverty can live to their full capacity (early brain development and safe environments are critical!)

**ASK:** how many children are hungry, homeless, without health care, abused & neglected victims of violence, without good quality child care? **REACH OUT** and make a difference with our youngest population in Durham. Sponsor a scholarship for child care, sponsor a play group of low income children, advocate for more programs for children to get a fair start in life, volunteer at agencies that need help on early childhood issues.

**Welcome Baby** reports that the **Giving Closet** clients increased from 500 to 800 this year and they always need sponsorships of \$50 for cribs, start an early literacy program or parenting program in a low income community and pray that each of us and our congregations will find ways to use our resources of time, skills, money, and political influence to assure that every child has the opportunity for a healthy, safe, and stimulating start in life. An insert will be mailed separately for use in a variety of ways.

**OUTREACH: Pilgrim United Church of Christ** reached out to their immediate neighbors and sponsored a child lunch program this summer for children of all ages. Volunteers are not only provided healthy food but age appropriate activities and lots of hugs and love. They also sponsor a weekly parenting program for prayer, reflection and a book discussion. For more information contact Carla Gregg, [christian\\_ed@frontier.com](mailto:christian_ed@frontier.com)

**KidsCycle** sponsors consignment sales of children clothes and includes a diaper drop-off and donations to Welcome Baby for their program. Visit [www.kidcyclenc.com](http://www.kidcyclenc.com) for more information.

**Watts Street Baptist** is actively planning a Children’s Sabbath Service. Contact Kacey Reynolds Schedler, Interim Minister with Children and their Families at [kaceyrey@gmail.com](mailto:kaceyrey@gmail.com).

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

[www.dpfc.net/EarlyChildhoodFaithInitiative.aspx](http://www.dpfc.net/EarlyChildhoodFaithInitiative.aspx); [www.endpovertydurham.org](http://www.endpovertydurham.org);  
[Sign-up for e-news from Durham’s Partnership for Children and join us on facebook!](#)

**NEW: Check out the [Partnership Blog!](#) [Subscribe to it or check it often to stay in touch with Durham’s early childhood world.](#)**

To **unsubscribe, for more information or to provide feedback**, contact Winnie Morgan at [winniewmorgan@juno.com](mailto:winniewmorgan@juno.com).

*Please forward this newsletter to appropriate persons on your staff or submit their e-mail.*