

URBAN ADVOCACY UPDATE – APRIL 2020

JERICHO ROAD COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER: For such a time as this, Jericho Road Community Health Center is primed to serve the vulnerable of Buffalo with compassionate medical care in response to the pandemic of COVID-19. In a message to staff, Dr. Myron Glick referenced the biblical story of Esther, encouraging staff to step forward with courage to face this critical moment in our city, nation and world.

Since March 20, Ruth has focused spiritual care ministry primarily on staff and patients outside the clinic with those who have tested positive for the virus. She helps with shopping and daily delivery of meals, and she worked with a team to coordinate volunteers who sewed masks and gowns. Over 850 masks have been made, enough that now some have been given to patients. On Maundy Thursday, Ruth shared with Jericho Road staff, the message of John 13 when Jesus washed the feet of the disciples and said, “A new commandment give I to you that you love one another as I have loved you.” These staff practice daily acts of service and love: in the isolation unit, cleaning the building at night, washing hundreds of cloth masks to protect medical providers, supporting those struggling with anxiety to find inner calm. Please pray protection for ones who work tirelessly on the frontlines to meet medical needs.

At Vive, people come as asylum-seekers for refuge, having fled war, persecution and suffering in other countries. Jericho Road provides housing, food, and legal services. During the time of COVID-19 Jericho Road staff have worked around the clock to protect the health and residents of Vive. Jericho Road’s global work includes friends around the world, with clinic sites in Sierra Leone, the Congo and Nepal. Please pray for marginalized persons globally who are especially vulnerable during this global pandemic.



The pandemic disproportionately affects people who live with economic inequality, so thank you to churches responding. Many city residents have health conditions with greater risk of harm, and economic vulnerability that leads to instability.

Through **MISSION OF CHRIST CHURCH** Pastor Yoshua Bashizi calls to communicate with families God’s peace in this stormy time as many newcomers to Buffalo try to grasp what’s happening, both in their new US home and with loved ones in Africa. Global Bridge is poised to assist with needs and to offer trauma healing care. **GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH** has expanded participation through Facebook Live.

DISTANCE EDUCATION: Houghton College Buffalo Symphony Circle students now meet online. In March we had a zoom conversation with an imam at a Getzville mosque, so students could hear an insider voice and ask questions. Young adults in multi-faith, multicultural contexts bring voices and energy, needed now more than ever. At Hope House, nine formerly incarcerated students continue studies with correspondence materials by mail, internet for some, phone calls, and occasional visits with social distancing. See the website of [“Standing Up for Racial Justice”](#) to meet prisoners’ urgent basic personal needs.

In these days we remember- nothing can separate us from God’s love. --Steve & Ruth Strand