

# Word on the Street

Volume I, Issue XII, July/Aug. 2006    Here's Life Inner City in New York City    Matt and Anna Shenk

## Settling in to Crown Heights, Brooklyn

*"Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper." – Jeremiah 29:5-7*

We have arrived in Crown Heights, Brooklyn and it is so sweet to finally be settling here! We have been profoundly touched by the welcome we have received, not only from our church, Greater Restoration, but also from so many of our new neighbors.

While there are challenges in this neighborhood, they are greatly overshadowed by the amazing community that exists here. Already, we are getting to know the folks in our building and along our street. It is like nothing we've ever experienced and we are so thankful for this gift, which you helped make possible.

It is such a joy to go out each day and run into multiple people we know. On any given day, we'll walk over to a friend's house to help them with a project or share a meal, and along the way we'll see one of the kids from the after-school program at our church and visit for a while. Or we'll be at the grocery store and see someone from our building and strike up a conversation.

Our new apartment is just what we were praying for as well. It is four blocks from our church, five blocks from the subway and in a building that is well-cared for and has lots of families. We even have a second bedroom so that we can accommodate guests more comfortably!

We thank God for each of you who have been with us on this journey. Your prayers, encouragement and financial sacrifices have given us the ability to follow the Lord's calling to settle in Crown Heights, and to seek its peace and prosperity. We cannot wait to share with you all that the Lord does here and it is our sincere hope that you will share equally in both our struggles and our victories. We may be the ones serving here on a day-to-day basis, but each of you is an integral part of this ministry.

- Please join us in praising God for the apartment He has provided and for our wonderful neighbors. Pray that we would have wisdom to go about building relationships with folks in our building and in our community.
- Please pray that God would raise up a few more ministry partners for us. **We need roughly \$285 per month in pledges *before* we can begin ministry with Here's Life Inner City.** We're praying that this need will be provided for by the time we take the kids to camp in mid-August (see story on back). Please let us know if there is anyone you think we should share our ministry with!

## Here's Life Conference in Detroit, June 23-29

On June 23, we'll be traveling to Detroit for the annual staff conference of Here's Life Inner City. We are excited to get to know our local New York City teammates better, and to meet our colleagues from Here's Life's sixteen other cities across the U.S. One focus of the conference is immigration, which is a very timely subject and one that we will benefit greatly from. Roughly half of the folks in Crown Heights are immigrants and we're hoping that this conference will give us a better understanding of the issues immigrants face and how we can help. The conference will also be a great time of planning for the coming year.

- Please pray that God would use this time to grow us in His vision for urban ministry, and that we would have ample time to build relationships with our teammates.

## Citikidz Camp in Pennsylvania, August 13-19



Jeffland, a member of the after-school program at our church, at last year's camp in Pennsylvania.

Last August, Anna was finishing up the publication of the Boys & Girls Club's annual report. Matt was working on setting up the first computer lab at a Here's Life partner church. This August, we're taking nine teens from our church's after-school program to what is certain to be one of the most amazing weeks of their lives. From **August 13-19**, we'll be taking the teens to "Citikidz", a camp that is staffed by urban Christians who know how to minister to kids in a unique way. The camp gives our teens a chance to get away from the stresses and pressures of city life and to just be kids. Each day they'll have opportunities to experience new things such as hiking and ropes courses. They'll also have an opportunity to hear the gospel in a way that makes sense to youth their age. We feel that it is a privilege to be taking these teens to camp and we are so excited to see God work in their lives. It's a great way to start off our ministry here in NYC!

- Please pray for safe travel as we drive to and from Western Pennsylvania, and that God would do amazing things in the hearts and lives of our youth. Pray that God would enable us to build stronger relationships with the teens.