

Word on the Street

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Here's Life Inner City in New York City

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A Brooklyn Primer

New York City is big... really big. It took us years of living there to feel that we had a handle on the city, and there are still sections of New York that we have yet to explore. We hope this newsletter will give our friends and partners outside New York a better idea about where we live.



Map of the New York City Boroughs

Facts:

- New York City is made up of five *boroughs*. These boroughs are Brooklyn, Manhattan, Bronx, Queens, and Staten Island.
- The population of these five boroughs is roughly 8.1 million people.
- Brooklyn, where we live, is New York's largest borough with roughly 2.6 million inhabitants. If Brooklyn were a city on its own, it would be the fourth largest city in the United States.
- Brooklyn is the coolest borough in New York, evidenced in part by the widespread popularity around the nation of people wearing "Brooklyn" t-shirts and sweatshirts. 😊

Facts:

- We lived in Brooklyn Heights for our first three years in the city and Crown Heights is our new neighborhood.
- Crown Heights is split north and south by the Eastern Parkway and is divided into two police precincts along this line.
- The north part of Crown Heights (our neighborhood, which we simply call Crown Heights), is roughly 46% African-American, 46% Caribbean immigrants of African descent, and the rest a mixture of mostly Caucasian and Latino. South of the Eastern Parkway is a community with a large population of Hasidic Jews.
- Less than 50% of the kids in our neighborhood graduate from high school, 88% of the kids are eligible for the school's free lunch program, and only about 50% of the kids in the local elementary school are passing the city and state standards tests for English and Mathematics.
- In Crown Heights, we are fortunate to have the Brooklyn Children's Museum, Brower Park and many churches. Not far from the neighborhood are Prospect Park (designed by the same men as Central Park in Manhattan), the world-class Brooklyn Art Museum and the Brooklyn Botanical Garden.



Closer view of map with Crown Heights and our old neighborhood, Brooklyn Heights

Introducing: A Few of Our Friends

We feel so blessed to already have friends in Crown Heights and to have fellowship with believers who share the same vision for seeing our community transformed through the power of Christ. We thought you might enjoy learning a little about the people we so frequently mention:



The Bogans and The Webbs

Ken Bogan is the pastor of our church, Greater Restoration. He and his wife Bettye are long-time residents of Crown Heights and started the church in 1997. Pastor Bogan never sits still and can be found doing everything from serving as a mediator in the community to helping a recent immigrant fill out paperwork. In other words, he does whatever is needed to meet the needs of the community and that's what we so admire about him! His wife, Bettye, who works full time for the city's Department of Education, also works tirelessly at the church and in the community and is often busy caring for children in need.

Beth and Jared Webb - who are also on staff with Here's Life Inner City - have lived and ministered in Crown Heights for three years. In addition to running our church's after-school program, the couple is involved in community development and Jared co-pastors the church with Pastor Bogan. The Webbs have been a constant source of encouragement to us on this journey.

Rich and Sarah McCullah are some of the first friends we made in New York four years ago. Recently, they also moved to Crown Heights. They have one son, Joshua, who is twelve months old and one of the sweetest kids we know. Rich and Sarah were members of the Village Church in Manhattan, where we worshipped for the three years prior to joining Greater Restoration. They joined Greater Restoration the same week as we did! Rich is an artist and carpenter who has opened a studio in Crown Heights and Sarah is a social worker who helps incarcerated juveniles at Rikers Island prison transition back into society at the end of their sentence.

Prayer and Praise

- We will be in New York City from June 12-15. While Matt is in planning meetings with the national team of Here's Life, Anna will look for an apartment in Crown Heights and continue with fundraising efforts. Pray that God would lead us to the apartment where He wants us to live. We will return to Virginia from June 15 through the end of the month.
- Praise God for providing 92% of the monthly/annual funds we need to report to ministry full time. While this is great news, we are still lacking 8% of our needed funds and we need your prayers that God would open doors to new people whom we can share our ministry with. Pray that God would provide for our remaining needs so that we can move back to Brooklyn by July 1.
- Pray that God would help us to make a smooth transition back into city life after being outside New York for nine months. Pray that we would quickly get to know our new neighbors.

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