



**Catholic Charities**  
ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT LOUIS  
*Midtown Center*

# The Neighbor

1202 South Boyle • St. Louis, MO 63110 • 314-534-1180  
www.midtowncc.org

**JANUARY 2012**

Serving: [Forest Park Southeast](#) [Shaw](#) [Fox Park](#) [Tiffany](#) [McRee Town](#) [Gate District](#) [Compton Heights](#) [Southwest Garden](#)

## TAKE A CHANCE! GET INVOLVED!

The New Year brings resolutions and a chance to start fresh. If you are looking for a change, to get involved in something, Midtown has some “fresh” ideas. In 2012, make a fresh start and work to move the world toward good.

**The Women’s Helping Hands Bank:** Americans believe we should “pull ourselves up by our bootstraps”. This excludes those who cannot pull themselves up--the poor, women, minorities and immigrants—because of systemic issues beyond their control. With this in mind, Midtown helped start a micro-lending project called “the Women’s Helping Hands Bank”. The “bank” is organized to serve low-income families through small loans for necessities ranging from tuition or uniform fees to start-up businesses.

The movement for micro-lending manifests the slogan “think globally, act locally.” Americans focus our attention and resources elsewhere--to end hunger in Africa or provide Chinese children with clothes. While noble concerns, it is important to understand there are people who need help in our communities. *Think* globally, but *act* locally. Change can start in our own cities, communities and neighborhoods. Take a chance, act locally by joining the Women’s Helping Hands Bank this year! Get involved and help your family.

**City Greens Produce:** How much do we know about the food we’re eating? Americans waste 40% of the food produced, amounting to 30 million tons of food. Food rots in transport from farm to store or on grocery store shelves. The solution to such waste is two-fold: producers sell food (particularly produce, dairy, and eggs) at lower cost, and consumers, buy local.

How do we make healthy produce available to average or lower income Americans? City Greens Produce works with Missouri farmers to provide access to fresh, quality produce *at or below cost*. Foodies discover a haven full of delicious treats while old-fashioned cooks uncover all the ingredients they need for their home-style dishes. Suburbanites mingle with city-dwellers. St. Louisans come together at a one-of-a-kind market where everyone can afford to eat healthy. Join the movement at City Greens—good food for all!

## Good News

\* The Midtown family was abundantly blessed this Christmas with help, hope and hospitality. Thanks to the many people who helped make Christmas merry for the children and teens in groups. We would especially like to thank...Santa and the University of Dayton alumni for sharing breakfast with us in early December...the employees of Novus International, the Wolken family, and Tod Mueller and friends who assisted Santa in providing gifts for club group members. It is in giving we receive and experience the love of the Christ Child.

\* The 22<sup>nd</sup> Family Christmas Program was enjoyed by more than 200 neighbors and friends who were lead to the heart of Christmas by children, teens and Midtown Mamas. Carols were sung, skits enjoyed, dances performed and poetry shared. The learning and fun continues in the New Year as groups and tutoring resume January 9<sup>th</sup>!

\* The Family Christmas Party was filled with the Spirit of the season. Thanks to Board members lead by Lisa Vonder Haar food and music was provided as we visited, sang carols, and enjoyed the companionship of neighbors and friends.

\* In January, the St. Louis Poetry Society will again be making a “Poetry Connection” with children and teens at Midtown. Watch for their efforts in future issues of *The Neighbor*.

*I want to be Good News to Other People”*  
Sr. Thea Bowman

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

After the holidays, families return to the normal issues of life, caring for children, seeking work, and establishing households. Some of the items needed during the winter include beds (twin and baby beds), food, help on utilities and heaters. If you are able to help with any of these things contact John or Emily.

Midtown’s annual “I Knew That” trivia night will be held on Saturday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> at the College Church Ballroom. Save the date for a night of fun and plan to bring your own table of 8 brilliant, trivia aficionados.

*“Rejoice in hope, be patient under trial, persevere in prayer, live peaceably with everyone.”*

*Romans: 12:12*

## MIDTOWN COOK'S CORNER

This heart healthy recipe will warm your family from the inside out! To add variety in flavor color and texture, add several different kinds of beans (black, kidney or garbanzo), or add more veggies such as carrots and celery. If you add extra veggies increase the amount of chicken broth.

### White Chicken Chili

#### Ingredients:

1 10oz can white chunk chicken  
 3 cups cooked white beans      1 med. onion, chopped  
 1 can low sodium diced tomatoes  
 4 cups low sodium chicken broth  
 ½ med. green pepper, chopped      2 tsp chili powder  
 1 med. red pepper, chopped      2 cloves garlic, minced  
 1tsp ground cumin      1tsp oregano  
 Cayenne pepper and Cilantro taste  
 6 Tbsp shredded Monterey Jack cheese

**Directions:** In a large soup pot, add the chicken, beans, tomatoes and chicken broth. Cover and simmer over medium heat. Spray a nonstick frying pan with cooking spray. Add the onions, peppers and garlic and sauté until the veggies are soft, 3-5 minutes. Add the onion and pepper mixture to the soup pot. Stir in the chili powder, cumin, oregano and, as desired, the cayenne pepper. Simmer about 10 minutes until vegetables are soft. Ladle into warmed bowls and sprinkle with cheese and a little cilantro.

## HEALTH C.A.R.E.S

This makes a great addition to the soup recipe or a delicious breakfast muffin.

### Apple Corn Muffins

#### Ingredients:

2 cups all purpose flour      ½ cup yellow corn meal  
 ¼ cup packed brown sugar      1 Tbsp baking powder  
 ¼ tsp salt      ¾ cup fat free milk  
 2 egg whites (or whole eggs)      ½ cup corn  
 1 apple, peeled and coarsely chopped

**Directions:** Preheat oven to 425. Line a 12 cup muffin pan with paper liners. In a large bowl, combine the flour, cornmeal, brown sugar, baking powder and salt. Stir to blend evenly. In a separate bowl, combine the milk and eggs. Add the apple and corn and whisk to mix evenly. Pour over the flour mixture. Stir lightly until all are slightly moist. Batter will be lumpy. Fill muffin cups 2/3 full. Bake about 30 minutes. *Serving size: 1 muffin*

*Nutritional Info: Calories 130 Protein 4g Total Fat 0g Carbs 28g Cholesterol 3mg Sodium 150mg*

## WHAT'S HAPPENIN'...

In 2012 the club group members of Midtown will strive to *let their light shine!* Through actions, attitudes, and activities we will explore and express a positive and hope-filled approach to the New Year. With Martin Luther King, Jr. as our guide group members will seek ways to drive out the darkness of fear and anger with the light of love and hope. Join us by striving for Perfect Attendance if you are already a club member or registering your children **today** if you are not.

**JANUARY 9 – 12 Celebrate and Share...**club group members will ring in the New Year through games and activities designed to make a little noise. We will also share holiday happenings and craft a New Year reminder to let our light shine.

**JANUARY 13<sup>th</sup> Come Play with Us...**Playgroup resumes for all after school club group members. Join us and check out our new toys!

**JANUARY 16<sup>th</sup> Happy Birthday Dr. King!** To celebrate and honor the life and work of this Peaceful Rainbow Warrior the offices at Midtown will be closed today.

**JANUARY 17 – 19 People Let Your Light Shine...**activities will help us explore the life, work and words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We will be inspired to let our lights and lives reach out in peace to make our world a kinder and more just place.

**JANUARY 23 – 26 ...Let it Shine for All the World to See...**watch the walls and halls of Midtown for expressions crafted and written by club members about the change they wish to see and the actions they will take to make it happen. Be inspired!

*...speaking of walls...*

**join neighbors and friends  
 at 5:30pm on Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>  
 for the GRAND OPENING  
 of the City Greens Photography Project!**

Photos will be on display through March 4<sup>th</sup>.

## FAMILY NUTRITION

### CITY GREENS

Happy New Year! January 1<sup>st</sup> may mark an exciting time for many neighbors--a time for new beginnings, hope for a happy and successful year, and a fresh outlook. With that said, why not start eating healthier food?

It might be intimidating to take on such a difficult task. City Greens Produce may be able to help. Making the decision to change your diet for the better will have so many positive effects. Can you imagine having a boost of energy, and maybe having less weight to carry around? How about helping your blood pressure go down without pills? If these things interest you, visit the market and chat with the City Greens staff.

Eating healthier does NOT mean sacrificing taste. In fact, in most cases you will find the more you open yourself up to eating natural foods, the more appreciation you will have for all the tastes of the food palette. Visit our market, located in the basement of Midtown, any Thursday between 11-5 to make some tasty changes in your life!

## ASTHMA H.E.L.P.

What do you know about...ASTHMA??

1. Asthma accounts for more school absenteeism than any other chronic disease.
2. In the St. Louis region, one out of every eleven children under the age of 18 lives with asthma. In some area schools, as many as **one out of every five** children has asthma.
3. According to the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, approximately 140,000 adults and more than 45,000 children in the St. Louis region live with asthma.
4. In 2005, hospital charges for asthma in St. Louis City totaled more than \$8.8 million.
5. Asthma leads to 2 million emergency room visits and 5,000 deaths per year in the U.S.
6. Morbidity rates for African American children are more prevalent than for white children, with, and 500% higher death rate from asthma.
7. The rate of asthma-related emergency department visits by African Americans in Missouri is over four times higher than the rate for whites.
8. **In 2003, African Americans made up 19.5% of the region's population, but accounted for 59.7% of asthma emergency department visits and 54.2% of asthma hospitalizations.**

Don't let someone you love become one of these statistics. Talk to Sam for resources, help and information.

## Family PRIDE

As we begin a new year, we have a lot to look forward to in the Family PRIDE program! We will continue with our regular activity each month, including play groups, field trips, and opening our store and lending library. This month play group will be held on January 13<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-2:30pm. We will re-group after a long holiday season and talk about goals and desires for us and our families in the New Year! We will also take a field trip to the Carpenter branch of the St. Louis Public Library to enjoy "Daytime Storytime." If you want to open a library card for yourself or your child, bring your identification. The Store and Lending Library will re-open in February.

### Eating Right: Getting off to a good start!

Eating better is always a popular and wise choice for a new year's resolution. Food habits start at a very young age, so it is important your child starts eating right in order to avoid lifelong health concerns. Poor nutrition not only affects children's physical growth and development, but also affects your child's emotional development. A child who is poorly nourished may be restless, irritable, or withdrawn.

You are your child's most valued role model! In order to make sure your child eats better, it is helpful for caregivers to develop a nutritious diet themselves. You are the single most important influence on what your child learns to eat!

Try to create a daily routine for meal and snack times. Foods which contain lots of sugar (candy and cookies), may be saved as "special treats." Serve kid-size portions! Giving children their own special plates and bowls helps control portion size. Allowing children to choose different foods in each food group teaches them to include a variety of foods in their diet. Instead of giving your child sugar and juice, offer fruits and vegetables!

Changing eating behavior is one of the most difficult tasks to accomplish. Start small and come to Midtown's City Greens Market where you have access to healthy, locally grown foods! Get off to a good start this year and help your child eat right and feel good!

### Important Dates to Remember:

**1/13/12: Playgroup 1:00-2:30pm**

**1/20/12: Field trip to St. Louis Public Library**

# PERFECT ATTENDANCE

Christmas celebrations went on all month. Children, teens and moms who didn't miss a single day of club during these fun and special times shared the Spirit of the season with each other in games, parties and at the annual Christmas program. Congratulations to the December club group members who didn't miss a single opportunity for celebrating the birth of Christ by being with each other.

## THE STAR FROG

### KOOL KIDS

Montia Atch  
 Javante Chandler  
 Arianna Collins  
 O'Jauri Conway  
 Deborah Hodge  
 Kameron Knighten  
 Ra'shawn Marshall  
 Skye Maxwell  
 Solana Miller  
 Jadon Miller  
 Allyssa Parker  
 Kristopher Phiri  
 Bonita Scott  
 Tiara Smith  
 Christal Williams  
 Nellie Brooks  
 Kendall Dukes  
 Serenity Martin

## THE CLEVER DREAM-MAKERS

India Cockrell  
 Lakayla Chandler  
 Asia Hinton  
 Shanya Johnson  
 Devon Liddell  
 Devon Phillips  
 Philanchaz Romieux  
 Caileb Martin  
 Ethan Stevenson  
 Daron Wilson  
 Reeves Word

## TEEN FAME

Marcus Collins  
 Dia Harper  
 Tiana Harris  
 Aniyah Hinton  
 Aaliyah Hunt  
 Kavon Sykes  
 Robert Tyler  
 Percy Dobbins Jr

## INTELLIGENT OPTIMISTIC DREAMERS

Deborah Austin  
 Donyle Austin  
 Machel Bagby  
 Bria Burks  
 Trey Cockrell  
 Diasha Duncan  
 Melisa Dukes  
 Eleasia Farmer  
 Crystal Harris  
 Danielle Hodge  
 Ramia Hodge  
 Kristina Johnson  
 Denisha Latimore  
 Dionda McCray  
 Tamosgea Mitchell  
 Dyamond Robinson  
 Tamika Smith  
 Destinee Valentine  
 Myltus Walker  
 Anika Word  
 Ali Worthan

## JUNIOR LEADERS

Dyamond Robinson  
 Denisha Latimore  
 Debra Austin  
 Crystal Harris  
 Dionda McKay  
 Kristina Johnson

## THE HIP HOP KIDS

Tamond Bulter  
 Erick Clemons  
 Omarion Collins  
 Zi-kia Ewing  
 Keyon Knighten  
 Nastasha Phiri  
 Kandace Scott  
 Tyrell Smith  
 Marion Dukes  
 Jasmine Brefford  
 Zachary Stevenson

## THE MIDTOWN THUNDER RIDERS

Tyrese Chandler  
 Sean Craft  
 Kahli'la Knighten  
 Janelle Kelly  
 Pierre Dobbins  
 Marneisha Logan  
 India Moore  
 Daijah Ming  
 Courtney Barfield

## MIDTOWN MAMAS

Ethel Banks  
 Susie Biddle  
 Alice Brocks  
 Pearl Burks  
 Estelle Chapey  
 Margaret Fleming  
 Ernestine Isaiah  
 Arzella Cockrell  
 Betty Howard  
 Pat Knighten  
 Pearlle Pillers  
 Vernesta Scott  
 Bobbie Sykes

**The good we secure ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life.**

Jane Addams

## Emily Eliminating Emergencies

If your home or apartment is letting in cold or warm air it might be time to weatherize! Neighbors who are homeowners or tenants should contact the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis for weatherization assistance. If you rent your apartment, your landlord must agree to pay 5% of cost for services or meet the income guidelines to waive any of the fees. Urban League will send a licensed contractor to your home to install wall and ceiling insulation, sealing air leaks, installing weather stripping, dryer venting, glazing and repairing windows and doors, minor duct repair, hot water tank repair, furnace repair or replacement. Contact Emily for assistance with completing the application.

### P.E.O.P.L.E. 1<sup>ST</sup>

On November 4th, 2011, 2 participants successfully completed the requirements to graduate from Midtown's PEOPLE 1<sup>st</sup> program. Congratulations to Leslie Knight and Nadine Cole. The next PEOPLE 1<sup>st</sup> class begins January 23rd, 2012. Orientation will be Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. For more information on registration, contact Kimyatta.

#### The Power of a Simple Thank-You Note

*A simple thank-you letter after an interview wields considerable influence, and reflects favorably on your candidacy for a position. Why?*

**1. Thank-you notes show your interviewer common courtesy and respect.** In sending a thank-you note after an interview, you tell your interviewer in no uncertain terms you appreciate the time given to you.

**2. You automatically stand out.** The majority of job applicants fail to send post-interview thank-you notes. A note puts you in a position to shine simply by making the effort.

**3. A thank-you note gives you an opportunity to reiterate points you made during your interview.** Have you ever left an interview wishing you'd more strongly emphasized a certain skill or experience? A thank-you letter gives you the chance to do just that. After using the first paragraph to thank your interviewer, a brief second paragraph may touch on the key points you made in your interview.

**4. Demonstrate your written communication skills.** In reading your interview thank-you note, your interviewer sees firsthand how you handle yourself on paper. You'll use similar skills every day with the company's potential clients, customers and vendors.

Writing thank-you notes isn't terribly difficult or time-consuming. Be sure to follow through, preferably the same day as your interview. It can make a much bigger difference than you might think -- perhaps even the difference between the job going to you or someone else.

## HEALTH C.A.R.E.S.

### TAX TIME

Free Electronic Income Tax Return Preparation and tax information is available to families with yearly income less than \$50,000. This service is offered by the St. Louis Tax Assistance Program. It is possible you may be eligible for a tax refund EVEN if no taxes were withheld.

The following documents must be furnished in order to prepare your tax return: all w's & 1099's; a copy of your 2010 tax return; a copy of your check for direct deposit of your refund; a driver's license or state ID for both the taxpayer and spouse; proof of childcare expenses; Social Security Cards for all family members. If filing a joint return, both spouses must be present in order to sign the tax return.

#### Tax Service Locations:

Cardinal Ritter College Prep, 701 North Spring Ave. (63108); St. Mary's High School, 4701 S. Grand Blvd. (63111); St. Louis Board of Education, 801 North 11<sup>th</sup> (63101).

#### Dates & Hours of Operation:

Every Saturday from 8:30am – 11:30am on January 28<sup>th</sup>, Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>, & Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>.

Clients are seen on a first-come, first served basis, so arrive early. You can also visit The Internal Revenue Service Office located at 1222 Spruce St. (63103) to have your tax return prepared, free of charge (Mon. – Fri., 8:30 am – 4:30 pm). File FREE here, don't pay for your taxes to be done.

**ATTENTION:** Seniors and/or disabled Midtown clients: Maureen has copies of the 2011 MO-PTC form (circuit breaker), if you would like to schedule an appointment.

### P.E.O.P.L.E. 1<sup>ST</sup>

(People Eliminating Obstacles through the Pursuit of Learning and Employment)

**Class begins January 23, 2012**

**Orientation--Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>**

***Start the New Year with a New Outlook!***

***Make it Happen for Yourself***

***and Your Family!***

***Contact Kim for more information.***

## WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

*Ask not what your neighbors can do for you; ask what you can do for your neighbors...and what we can do together!*

Women in Leadership plan to ring in the New Year with the above motto in mind at every meeting and in every activity. Are you ready to rise to the challenge and join us or do you plan to sit at home and complain? Together we can make a difference in our community.

Become an **active member** of the Women's Helping Hands Bank and grow our assets as you work toward becoming eligible for a loan. **Active members** of WOMEN – NOW will be growing new housing in our community and be the first to become home owners. **Active members** of the Advisory Board for Community Enterprises give advice to shape the programs and services available for women and children at Midtown. **Active members** of the Midtown MAMAS are spiritually and emotionally uplifted through their contact with one another. Maybe you noticed the key words...**active members**.

The following poem was shared by Willa Mae Phillips to encourage and define our members. Picture yourself as you read it; where do you fit? It's a New Year...how can you help?

### TAKE IT HOME

**Are you an active member,  
the kind that would be missed?  
Or are you just contented  
that your name is on the list?  
Do you attend the meetings  
and mingle with the flock?  
Or do you stay at home  
to criticize and knock?  
Do you take an active part  
to help the work along?  
Or are you satisfied  
to only just belong?  
Do you work with your committee  
and get right in and mix?  
Or do you leave the work to just a few  
and talk about the "cliques"?**  
Think this over friends.  
You know right from wrong.  
Are you an Active Member  
or do you just belong?

## TUTORING TIME

A great way to begin the New Year is by reading to your children. Reading aloud, even to kids who know how to read, encourages family closeness and is a way to pass on family values. Reading helps strengthen and lengthen children's attention spans. The illustrations in children's books are beautiful and help kids develop an appreciation for art. Family reading time is inexpensive...only an investment of time, enthusiasm, and maybe a trip to the library are required. Make 2012 the year your family turns off the TV, the video games and the computer for an hour every day and reads a book together? Your teachers and librarians will love you for your effort!

Several newer local schools offer parents positive alternatives to the normally assigned choices. City Garden Charter School is currently located on Spring and Russell but is busy renovating a building on Tower Grove Avenue. They serve pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade and are the highest scoring Charter School in the city. Loyola Academy and Marian Middle School provide college prep work for middle school students. Their results are solid. To learn more visit the schools or talk to Joyce.

## PPRC PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT: CITY GREENS PRODUCE

The creative talents of our community will be on display between January 17<sup>th</sup> and March 4<sup>th</sup> at Midtown. A number of neighbors came every week (sometimes twice a week) to take photographs of people and food at City Greens Produce.

When you walk into Midtown, you will be immersed in a world of colors and creativity. Have you ever seen pictures of food with a life-like quality, as if each vegetable has its own heart and soul? This is what you will see, as well as, photos which show the connectivity of people through shared experiences with food.

The exhibition is part of the Public Policy Research Center at the University of Missouri St. Louis. Come join us for conversation, snacks and drinks at 5:30 on January 17<sup>th</sup> to open the exhibit!

**“...I will demonstrate my faith to you by my works.”**

**James 2: 18**