



Community Driven.

Winton Hills Community Church neighbors meet to fight crime

By Spencer Dennis • sdennis@enquirer.com • November 13, 2010

SPRING GROVE VILLAGE - More than 40 neighbors convened at Winton Hills Community Church on Saturday afternoon to discuss ways to reduce gun violence and crime.

The area, which includes Winton Hills and Winton Terrace, has withstood five homicides this year, according to crime statistics kept by the Cincinnati Police Department.

"It's time to take back our neighborhoods," said one local resident who identified himself as Moses. "One porch, one cul-de-sac at a time."

The discussion, organized by the church and the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence's community engagement team, lasted nearly 90 minutes - twice the planned amount of time.

Attendees - including pastors, educators, and day care providers from the neighborhood as well as teenagers, concerned parents, grandparents and two off-duty police officers - were passionate and sometimes angry when admonishing the state of their community.

Still, perseverance, love and prayer were recurring themes.

"Giving up on these kids is like slamming a door in God's face," said Stanley Ross, program coordinator for the community engagement team. "We all can change. We just don't realize how much we are capable of."

Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority

complexes, which make up many of the neighborhoods surrounding the church, were mentioned frequently by speakers.

"Those of us that grew up in CMHA know what it is like," said Ross. "We know the problems and the drug dealing that goes on. We also know the people that get lost in the process. That is unacceptable."

The assembly was visibly moved when Robin Moore revealed that her son was shot and killed by acquaintances of the family.

"We used to have to worry about the KKK coming to lynch us," said Moore. "But it's not the Klan that we have to worry about anymore. We are the only race that's killing each other."

Off-duty Cincinnati police officer Governor Williams attended to offer support.

Williams left his post as a homicide detective recently to return to the 5th District, which includes Winton Hills and Winton Terrace.

"I grew up here," he said. "It doesn't have to be this way."

Williams is particularly disturbed by the "numbness" he senses in the community.

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"Numbness to crime, numbness to death," he said. "People need to really feel what's going on again, and they wouldn't be able to live with this."

He believes things will turn around however if the community continues to galvanize and demand a resolution. "Absolutely this is helpful," he said. "This is exactly what we need is community involvement. At some point, the community has to want it."

Resource fair

The church and the community engagement team will hold a resource fair for the public 11 a.m. Dec. 11 at the Winton Hills Community Center, 5170 Winneste Ave.

The fair will provide information on job opportunities, social services, educational opportunities and legal services.

Information: 513-641 0422.

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