

# READY TO BUILD

*A Year of Celebration!*



## The Beginning: Learning to Build

All good stories have a beginning, and ours was set in motion twenty years ago when eight Gordon College students (including Paul and Glenna Malkemes) sat together on the floor of the unfinished chapel praying over a vision: A vision inspired by our Christian faith to involve teenagers in service, and compelled to practice what it means to love our neighbor daily. We all had a passion for the city of Boston – even though none of us had ever lived here.



So we listened. We spent a year and a half meeting with city leaders, praying, and planning before we did a single thing. Then, in July of 1996, we launched the first week of the Summer Missions Program (service-learning trips) for church youth groups. Together with teenagers we cleaned parks, lent a hand at a day camp, repaired picnic tables, and provided office help at a local non-profit. Supplies were so limited at one point we even used rocks to pound in nails. On the last day of that first trip, the youth leader bought us “real” tools!

Dorchester Temple Baptist Church (now Global Ministries Christian Church) became our home. The church family embraced and nurtured us. They shared their building space. Through a church connection, we moved to Elmhurst Street in Dorchester where our Neighborhood Ministry House is today.

While hanging out on our front steps we met neighbors of all ages. Glenna would blow bubbles with the kids. Paul would talk with neighbors about flowers and gardening. Over time, conversations become more personal; hopes, heartaches, and ideas were shared. As neighbors, we wondered “What could we do together to support families and improve our community?”

The Boston Project’s journey began with charity, inspired Jesus’ example of serving others. We would provide food, clothing, furniture, and an extra hand for neighbors as needed. Probably a bit too often, we did for others what they could have done for themselves. But as we grew, we realized the depth of our own need, and learned to receive from neighbors: words of wisdom, prayer, red snapper fish dinners, being taught how to cook rice and beans, and given furniture for our young children. We want to say thank you to all our neighbors. *We love you.*



## The Middle: Laying a Solid Foundation

Soon Bible Club and Homework Center began in response to families’ requests. One afternoon our doorbell rang and three neighborhood girls we knew were there. “Our Dad sent us over to see if you understand the “New Math” we have for homework. He was never taught this way in school.” We helped them the best we could that day. Within a week there were a dozen plus kids sprawled on our living room floor with their schoolwork most days!

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# Ready to Build

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Not long afterwards, The Boston Project began organizing with neighbors, to transform vacant lots into a children's park. An increasing number of people from churches and the community wanted to volunteer. We added staff to lead the Summer Missions Program. Our 13-street neighborhood association, the Talbot-Norfolk Triangle Neighbors United was formed building upon the organizing work of residents who had served their community for decades before Paul & Glenna moved to Elmhurst Street.

Our passionate commitment to love God and love our neighbor remained, but our understanding of the profound importance of justice grew. We grasped through the Bible, God's heart that we have solidarity with the oppressed, the immigrant, the widow and orphan. We had to acknowledge our own blindness, privilege, and brokenness. We began to transition much of our work toward leadership development such as job readiness for teenagers, and the training and empowerment of resident leaders. Ten years in, we discovered the national Christian Community Development Association and were excited to learn from diverse people doing similar work all across the country.

Our neighborhood continued to improve - adding to the beauty and strength which has always been present here. Neighbors worked with partners to add a bus stop park, community garden and housing to vacant, and once neglected spots. Hundreds of teenagers and adults volunteered annually. Today, our Board and staff are primarily from the community. The love of Jesus Christ is being expressed through actions and words. *We are all being transformed.*

## Looking Ahead: Ready to Build

Our vision continues to mature and is now best captured in this single word: **Shalom**. Shalom is found throughout God's story in the Bible, and expresses all that God desires for our neighborhoods; peace, harmony, wholeness, a right relationship with Jesus, your neighbor, and creation. We will keep working together as neighbors and partners to bring shalom to every nook and cranny of our TNT neighborhood. **God's shalom is what we desire for all neighborhoods across New England.**

What's coming by 2020? We will remain committed to the Talbot-Norfolk Triangle neighborhood, while also looking to replicate the principles of our work and Neighborhood Ministry House model in other areas. We will launch a more intentional leadership development strategy to equip neighbors, church partners, and like-minded people. We will add more arts-based youth programming to promote creativity and healing from community trauma. We will work with partners to add a local job hub. And we will undergird our neighborhood with a broader prayer movement.

*We look forward to building with you!*

# Thank You!

## 261 Contributors

Individual, family, and church contributions make up 65% of our annual budget, 20% from grants, and 15% from program revenue.

## 20 Years of Church Partners

### 20+ Years

CrossRoads Church  
Calvary Chapel Raynham  
Kingsley Community Church  
First Presbyterian Church of Newport  
Global Ministries Christian Church

### 15-20 Years

Bethany Presbyterian Church  
Grace Chapel  
Second Church of Dorchester  
First Baptist Church of Raynham  
First Parish Congregational Church of York

### 10-15 Years

Byfield Parish Church  
Calvary Community Church  
Gathering Christian Fellowship  
Newton Junction Baptist Church  
Second Church in Dorchester

### 5-10 Years

Danville Baptist Church  
Medway Community Church  
Rock Village Church  
Trinitarian Congregational Church

### 1-5 Years

First Baptist Church of Dorchester  
Rescued Church Boston

## Public & Private Partners

Boston Alliance for Community Health  
Boston Baptist Social Union  
Boston Public Health Commission  
Bowdoin Bike School  
City of Boston  
Boston Police, District B3  
Codman Square Neighborhood Dev. Corp.  
East Boston Savings Bank  
Fair Foods  
The Hunt Alternative Fund  
MassHousing  
The Protein Foundation  
Revision Urban Farm



**The Boston Project Ministries, Inc.**

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## Our Mission:

We mobilize and equip neighbors, volunteers, and congregations to build strong communities, characterized by God's shalom.



### Strengthening Youth & Families

A strong community is built on strong families. We care about the whole person including their spiritual, physical, social, academic, and economic needs. Christian Grant joined us in 2015 as our Youth Leadership Coordinator. Participation in our teen programs has grown, and we brought back summer Family Fun Nights in 2016.

*Celebrate!* Two dozen children deciding to follow Jesus.

### 2015 -16 Highlights

- **Spiritual Outreach Partnership.** Real Life, our weekly teen Bible study, grew quickly as we partnered with Rescued Church Boston.
- **Leadership and Employment.** We provided civic leadership and job-training for 25 teenagers.
- **Elmhurst Park.** Over 100 children participated in our free, drop-in program and hundreds of neighbors came to Family Fun Nights including Gospel concerts, paint night, a health and fitness event, and more.

## Strengthening Youth & Families



*Annual Report*

2015-2016

### 2015 -16 Highlights

- **Access to Healthy Food.** We brought Fair Foods (\$2 a produce bag) back to Elmhurst Park and partnered with a local urban farm and offered their Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program for neighbors.
- **Let's Get Moving.** Our Block Stewards launched a new series of events and activities to increase walking, biking, and healthy eating in our neighborhood.
- **Healthy and Efficient Homes.** We conducted energy surveys with over 125 families and provided resources and referrals to save money through home energy improvements.



## Our Neighborhood:

- 13 Streets
- 1,500 neighbors
- 525 families
- 400+ youth under 19
- 95% people of color
- 60% either below or right above the poverty line
- Full of *beauty, strength & caring* neighbors

## Building A Healthy Community

### Building a Healthy Community

Neighbors desire a community that is green, healthy, safe, and employed. We made significant progress at increasing access to healthy food and connecting neighbors to home energy resources. With partners, we are planning for new affordable housing and a business job hub as part of our Eco-Innovation District.

*Celebrate!* Neighbors pursuing a healthier lifestyle together.



### Partnering Church & Community

We value building bridges between churches and the community. There is much we can learn from one another, but the best is when we can serve together. We partner with churches throughout New England that want to love their neighbors while learning the principles of Christian Community Development.

*Celebrate!* Growing appreciation for church - community partnerships.

### 2015 -16 Highlights

- **Rescued Church Boston.** Recognized as a transformative church partner, Rescued joined with The Boston Project to provide Board members, staff, shared youth programs, and joint fundraising.
- **Summer Missions Program.** After a one-year hiatus in 2016, we look forward to bringing back the Summer Missions Program for church youth groups in 2017.
- **Neighborhood Peace Walks.** In 2016, we led Friday night peace walks through the TNT neighborhood praying and connecting with neighbors and sharing resources.



## Partnering Church & Community



### Developing Leaders

A strong community needs strong, local leadership. During 2015-2016 we had a number of long-term staff transition to new work, which created an opportunity to hire more staff from the neighborhood. The leadership team for TNT Neighbors United remains strong with 15-20 neighbor leaders. Our children and teenagers lead with passion and care for their community.

*Celebrate!* Adding nine new community leaders.

### 2015 -16 Highlights

- **Youth Ambassadors.** 12 teenagers learned about leadership, community strengths, and local challenges. They lead service days and worked on a Slow Streets Initiative to make streets safer.
- **Block Stewards.** In May 2015, we hired 3 residents (Maridena, Takiyah, Tiffany) to connect neighbors-to-neighbors, neighbors-to-resources, and to empower neighbors to tackle challenging issues with innovative solutions. They support families and a healthy community.
- **Crime Fighter of the Year.** In 2015, Paul Malkemes was recognized as Crime Fighter of the Year for the City of Boston; a reflection of the sustained work by many TNT neighbors and partners.

